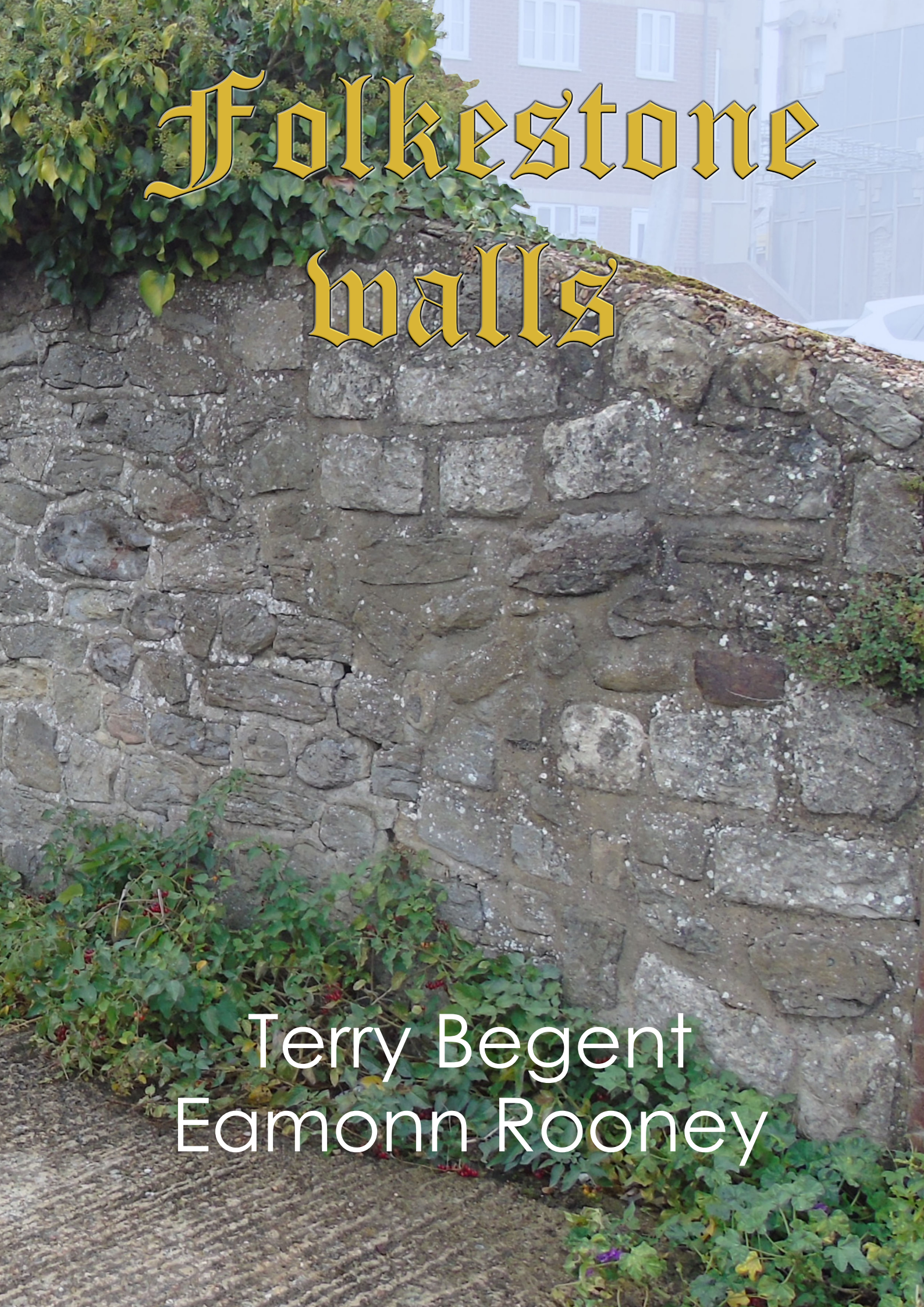

Folkestone
walls
Terry Begent
Eamonn Rooney

© 2020 Terry Begent and Eamonn Rooney

All rights reserved.

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, stored in a database and/or published in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the publisher.

Folkestone walls

How Folkestone found itself in the front line of keeping invading hoards at bay

Published by
Terry Begent & Eamonn Rooney
Folkestone, Kent

2020

Contents

Introduction..... 1

Fortress Folkestone 4
The strategic importance of the town to the nation

Historic maps and diagrams 16
Making use of the only graphic evidence available

Getting back to basics..... 20
How town walls work

The Norman Manoir 25
Enclosing the early town and priory

Edwardian Walls 41
Defences built during the 100-years War

The Priory Walls 45
When the priory moved outside the castle walls

Various isolated walls 76
Sections of ancient walls having no clear purpose

Preface

English history will remember the year 2020 for the country's struggle to break free from the European Union but World history will remember the year for the Covid Pandemic and its "lockdowns". Previous epidemics, like the 14th century plagues saw the isolation and control of geographic areas, but the 21st century pandemic saw the isolation and control of individuals, with limited contact permitted between them.

In this restricted environment, a chance remark between the authors about the familiar name given to an area of the town, known as "The Wall" led to the publication of a booklet of the same name, the contents of which has been included in this one. That publication showed how the 12th century priory moved outside the castle walls and had its own enclosing walls but raised a number of questions about the walls that it had moved out of. Where were they and what were they?

Local historian, Samuel Joseph Mackie, in his book *"Folkestone and its Neighbourhood"*, published in 1856, was of the opinion that the whole town had at some time been enclosed by walls but could offer little evidence to support this other than snippets that he found in local town records that have long since disappeared.

The authors, isolated and denied access to the town archives, such as the Town Charter of 1313, because of the pandemic, had to rely on the records and photographs that they had personally gathered over the years to see if there was any merit in what Mackie had suggested. Many of their daily exercise outings were spent surveying the town in the search for clues.

There was little left but a breadcrumb trail of bits and pieces- myths and legends; random quotes from official documents; or archaeological footprints in the landscape. Making sense of them was a bit like joining the dots to make a picture: you speculate, you try it out, rub it out if it doesn't work, or ink it in if it does, so there may be a few dots missing or we may have joined them together in the wrong way.

This lack of evidence means that this publication is highly speculative and interpretive and is presented to encourage further research and discussion.

Mackie put his reputation on the line by suggesting that Folkestone was a walled town but, in the end, it is up to the reader to judge whether we make the case that Mackie may have been right all along.

Terry Begent

Eamonn Rooney

December 2020

Introduction

Mackie was the first historian to suggest that Folkestone had been a walled and enclosed town in his book when he said:

> *"The occurrence of portions of stone walls in unlikely places, and for purposes where cheaper materials would have answered equally well, has long since suggested to me the notion that the old town was probably walled,* an idea that I find singularly verified by an examination of the municipal records, where we find numerous entries referring to the town walls, to the several gates, and to streets and places of which the titles have either been changed, or which have been long since swept away. The old wall, in all probability, surrounded the town on the land side, the sea side being sufficiently protected by its tall and steep cliffs, except at the low portion about the harbour, where we know there was a part of the wall, and one of the gates called the Sea Gate. Another of the gates was called Banker's Gate, which was situated in the neighbour• hood of Broad Street ; and near the Town Hall there appear to have been two others, called the West Gate and the Nether Gate. This latter was probably between the east side of the present King's Arms Inn, and the opposite side of Guildhall Street, where a few years since were the remains of a stone wall of considerable thickness. The site of the modern inn was formerly occupied by a great old gabled house, with numerous grotesque figures, which was used as a brewhouse. As the fact of this having anciently been a walled or fortified town has never been noticed by any previous author, it is perhaps only just that I should give some authority for the statement, and I therefore elsewhere quote a few of those entries in the minute books of proceedings at sessions and hundreds, and in the various annual accounts of the town wardens, that have led me to this conclusion.*
>
> ** I should scarcely like to be understood, in the present state of my investigations, as meaning that portions of the actual wall are still remaining, although such may possibly be the case ; but generally, I think, the materials being close at hand and useful, have been applied to domestic architectural purposes for which they were not originally intended. That portions existed a few years since, I am satisfied, and others may yet be hid in the structure of some of the older houses of the town, in which it is not unusual to find a mysterious combination of stone, brick, timber, and tiles"*

These views are echoed in some unpublished research, written in 1963 by the Reverend John Howard Brown, and currently held in the Heritage Room at Folkestone Library. In this he mentions some entries in the town records for payments made in the late 1500s.

- *To Boussch (Bush) for mending the Wall of Folkestone 2s (two shillings)*
- *For bere (sic) whilst the Walls of Folkestone were repairing'*
- *For Lime to repair the Town Walls.*

Mackie also supported his contention that the town was fortified by reference to entries in the minutes of the Common Assembly (effectively the town council in modern terms).

He records that about this time, a building which was sold to one Thomas Gibson, was described thus in the Common Assembly records,

> *"On the 16th August 1599, Rychard Knott, of the Parishe of West Langdon, Husbandman, did give graunt, and confirm to Thomas Gibson, of the towne of ffolkestone aforesaide, ffisherman, and his heirs, one messuage and one garden to the said messuage annexed, with those appertenences, situate, lying, and being in the towne of ffolkestone aforesaide, at a certeine place there called Eastbrook, to a common land towards the northeast, to the wall of the towne of ffolkesktone aforesaid toward the southeast to the messuage and land of Rychard Halle toward the northwest, and to the lands of the heirs of Thomas Palmer towards the west, etc.".*

Later on, he describes the steps taken to prepare for another invasion:

> *"The wars with Spain made the latter part of the sixteenth century and eventful period in the history of our country, and Folkestone shared largely in the common excitement of those days. The old walls were repaired and new defences erected, guns mounted, earthworks thrown up at the Bayle Stairs, watches set, the burgesses trained to arms, and orders issued for their conduct in cases of emergency"*

A number of entries in the town records in the 1700s, perhaps more than any others, indicate that there were indeed town walls. In a manorial roll dated 1734, we find that one Elizabeth Haines, widow, was the tenant of:

> *"One messuage ... one blacksmiths shop ... at a certain place called the Cistern Wall and do abutt to the Wall towards the West..."*

There is mention in the same source of the Chequer Inn;

> *"in Folkestone abutting to 'the stone wall called the Town Wall' towards the east and south".*

In 1772 a lease was enacted between Elizabeth Willard and Stephen Marsh, also in relation to the Chequer Inn:

> *"All that premises ... at a certain place called Little Seagate and do abut to the Little Sea Gate towards the east, ... and to the Town Wall towards the south".*

From the Calendar of Inquisitions Post Mortem and Other Analogous Documents Henry III vol.1, evidence in a court case resulting from the death of Hamon de Crevequer, Baron of Folkestone, in 1262, that said of the manor:

> *There is a capital messuage (the house and grounds), sufficiently well built, enclosed with a stone wall, of which no extent can be made, because it can scarcely be sustained for 40s per annum*

The last known mention of the Town Walls was in 1784 when the Common Assembly debated the question "*should the Town Walls be repaired*". The discussion was inconclusive and there are no references to the walls in the town records from that time.

So, if Folkestone was a walled town, where were those walls and why were they

erected?

The first part of that question was answered by Mackie when he talks about *"portions of stone walls"* that were still remaining in 1856- just 13 years after the arrival of the railway and four years before the pubescent coastal fishing village was hit by the growth spurt that turned it into a seaside, holiday resort In the latter half of the 19th Century.

Whilst the majority of those *"portions of stone walls"* were undoubtedly taken down and used as hardcore for the redevelopment of the town, a couple still remain and some of the others have left their footprints in the layout of the town or building plot boundaries.

The second part of the question above as to why the walls were erected can only be answered by considering the town in a national and international context that takes us back to the coming of the Romans. The historical notes in the following chapters may not, and are not intended to reach any degree of academic accuracy but are included merely to set the scene in our search for the town walls.

It would be nice to be able to point to hard evidence to support the hypothesis laid out in the following pages but the simple truth is that there is none. Mackie had the benefit of being able to view town records that are no longer available. We have to make the most of what he says, together with what we can see on the ground.

Some of the speculation that follows could be confirmed or otherwise by the contents of the Town Charter of 1313 but this, as already said, was not available to the authors at the time of writing

That charter allowed for the setting up a council and the election of a Mayor and was usually granted to merchants and craftsmen, at cost, and they were made "free men" but there had to be a clear distinction between them and those still bound to their feudal lord. This was achieved by building an enclosing wall around the town. Inside the walls, the freemen formed a council and ran their own affairs. Outside, the lord of the manor still had control.

Those walls also allowed the freemen to raise money by taxing outsiders wanting to trade in their market as they entered the gates. In Folkestone, the question is whether the walls were built after the charter or whether the town grew up within the Norman manor/castle walls that already existed.

Fortress Folkestone

The strategic importance of the town to the nation

Above: The cliffs that provide a natural barrier to any invasion with the natural breaks in them where towns have evolved and invasions have taken place:

- Deal- Roman invasion 55 BCE
- Dover- French invasion, 1215
- Folkestone- Danes, 891 CE , and French in 1216
- Rye- French in 1377 and 1449
- Hastings- French in 1339 and 1377

The strategic importance of the town depends to some degree on the time period involved which, in turn, dictates just which enemy is trying to invade.

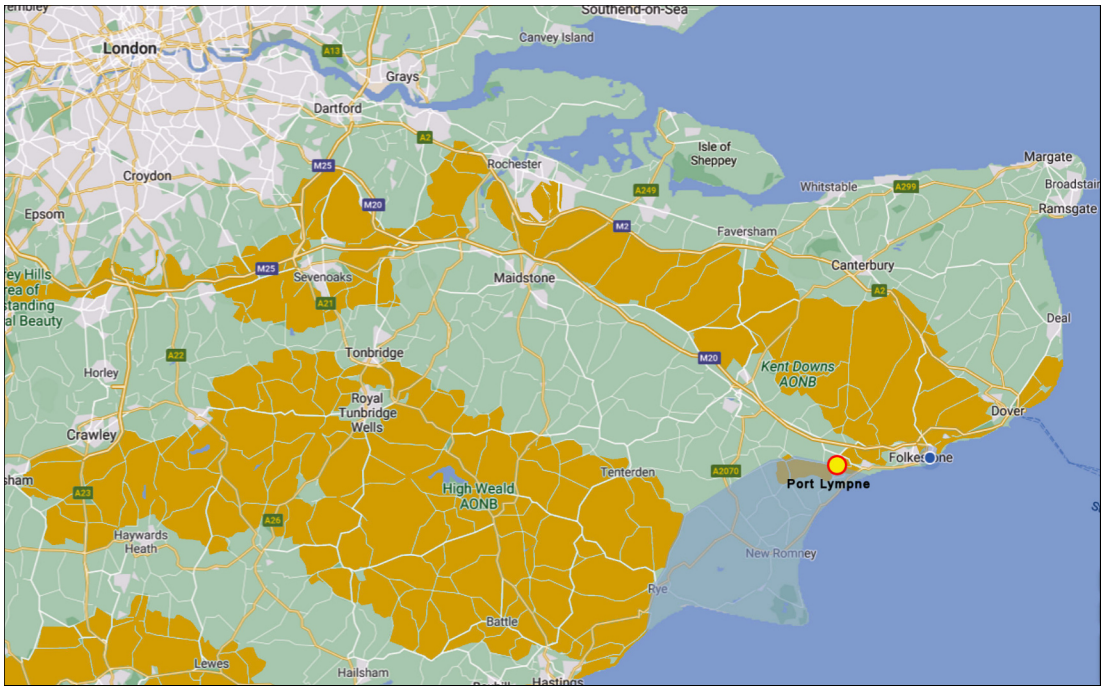
However, regardless of the era, somethings remain constant as can be seen from the picture above and the map below. The picture above shows the natural barrier presented by the coastal highlands along the south coast, together with the towns that occupy those gaps today.

In times gone by, the harbour at Rye stood on the coast but coastal deposits and silting have left it some way inland. The coastline in this area in 55 BCE is overlaid on the diagram below. Those coastal highlands effectively ran the length of the top edge of that overlay, i.e. from Port Lympne to Rye. Port Lympne became a main Roman, deep-water harbour but only, of course, sometime after their invasion.

Folkestone, therefore, was at the time (and for some time after) the only natural harbour with a good landing ground (The Stade) that gave access to the wide, open plains between the North and South Downs leading to the heart of the country.

This point was not lost on the German Leader, Adolf Hitler in Operation Sealion, his plans for the invasion of Britain during the Second World War, which planned mass landings between Folkestone and New Romney that would have been resupplied through Folkestone Harbour.

Not surprisingly, our own defences were constructed to counter this possibility, with several concentric “Stop Line” rings around London. The Outer London Ring was the strongest and best developed of these, mainly because it could be constructed in open countryside, on high ground that more or less followed the route of the modern M25, on the map below, to the west from Sevenoaks towards Guildford.



Folkestone stands as a gateway to the coastal plain leading to the heartlands of the nation.

North Downs pillbox on Blatchford Downs, in Surrey, overlooking the "killing ground" of the central plain and the South Downs beyond

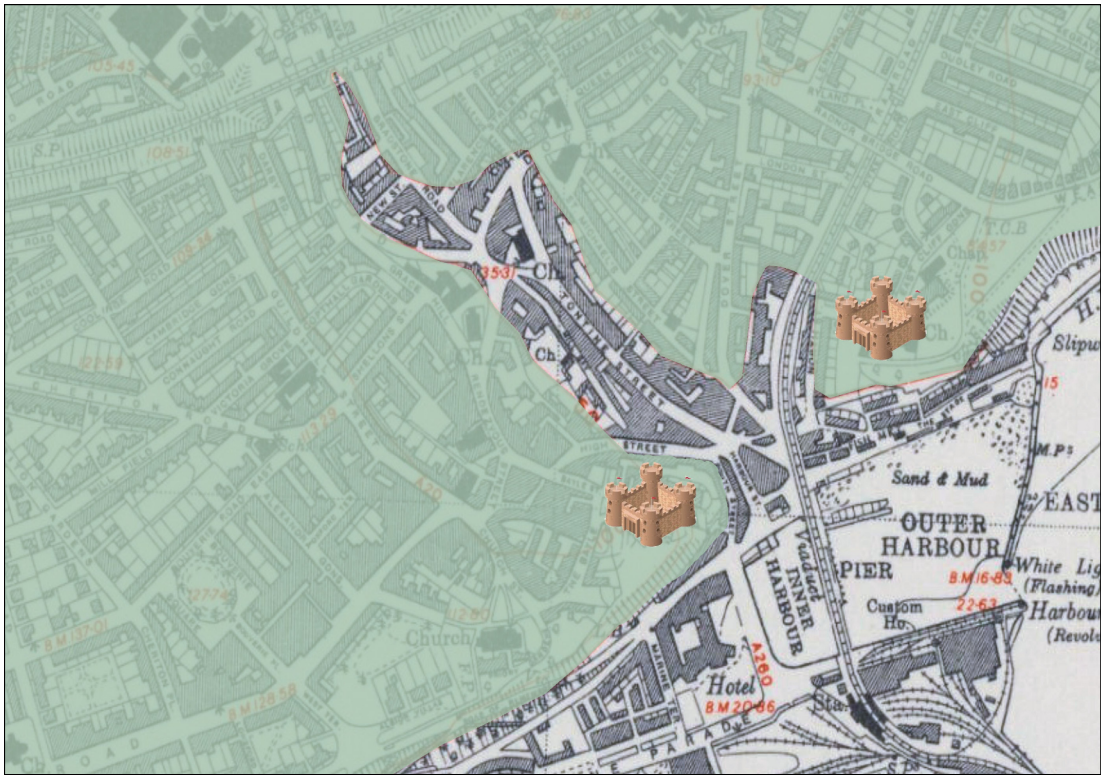
Folkestone lies beyond the far horizon behind the trees in the top, left corner of the picture

This defensive line was initially a "static defence" line of reinforced pillboxes like the one shown above but this was abandoned later on in favour of a more mobile defence strategy.

So, if Folkestone was a preferred invasion port because it was the gateway to the heartland of the country, we also need to look at how the local landscape played a part in the defence of the nation.

The diagram below shows the local map from 1947 with all the high ground shaded in green. There is no significance in the date of the map other than it excludes modern redevelopments but contains enough urbanisation to allow the reader to orientate the map and establish the area under discussion.

The central Tontine Street is built on top of a culvert containing the Pent Stream, for which this valley was the natural outlet to the sea. In ancient times, this stream flowed out from the end of what is now that street and then followed the line of the railway to the sea. There was no harbour but there was a good landing site, labelled "sand &



The natural defence provided by the high ground surrounding the Pent Stream valley

mud" in the "Outer Harbour", ideal for an invading fleet because they could beach a number of ships alongside each other before rushing the gap in cliffs.

Either side of that narrow gap and, indeed, all the way up the Pent Valley, there was high ground that would have made any invasion vulnerable to attack from above by defending armies. In some ways, an invading army always has the advantage since it has formulated its plans and assembled its troops before it sets out. It knows it is coming, the defenders don't and have to commit to building static defences just in case of the eventuality.

Folkestone also had one other natural defence it its armour, which is mentioned in *"A description and historical account of Folkestone and its neighbourhood"* by S. J. Mackie in 1856

> *"Among the many improvements, no greater one has been attempted than Tontine Street. The little stream, that, after performing its useful labours in turning the flour-mill and filling the pits of a tan-yard, was pent up in the valley leading to the harbour twice a-day by the rise of the tide, and overflowed, stagnated, and putrefied amidst hovels of the meanest and filthiest description, has been arched over……. "*

Being "pent up", i.e. prevented from flowing out to sea by the incoming tide, meant that the Pent Stream (no prize for guessing where the name comes from) overflowed twice a day and turned the floor of the valley behind the gap in a marshy morass difficult for cavalry and/or chariots to traverse.

However, once the invaders got to the end of the valley (in modern terms: moving from the top end of Tontine Street into Foord Road), they would have succeeded in breaking out into that central plain and, once again in modern terms, would then have a free run up the M20 motorway to London. As a result, Folkestone had a much greater importance to the security of the nation than its size might have indicated.

In Folkestone's case, any static defences would have been found on the high ground on either side of the gap as shown on the map on the previous page. The distance between the static defence installation and the gap in the cliffs increased as the range of the cannons improved and their overlapping arcs of fire would have allowed any invader to be engaged and destroyed much further out to sea.

For hand projectiles (spears and slingshot) you would have to wait for the enemy to get a lot closer before you could engage them, which was what happened when the Roman fleet first appeared.

The Roman Invasion

From the commentaries on Cesar's invasion of Britain in 56 BCE:

> *"These things being settled, having obtained proper weather for sailing... .he himself about the fourth hour of the day reached Britain with the first ships, and there beheld armed forces of the enemy posted on all the hills. Of which place this was the nature: the sea was confined so by close mountains, that a dart might be hurled from the higher places upon the shore. Having judged this by no means proper place for disembarking, he waited at anchor to the ninth hour, until the remaining vessels should assemble thither.*
>
> *.....having obtained both wind and tide favourable at one time, the signal being given and the anchors raised, having proceeded about seven miles*

from that place, he stationed his ships near an open and level shore. "

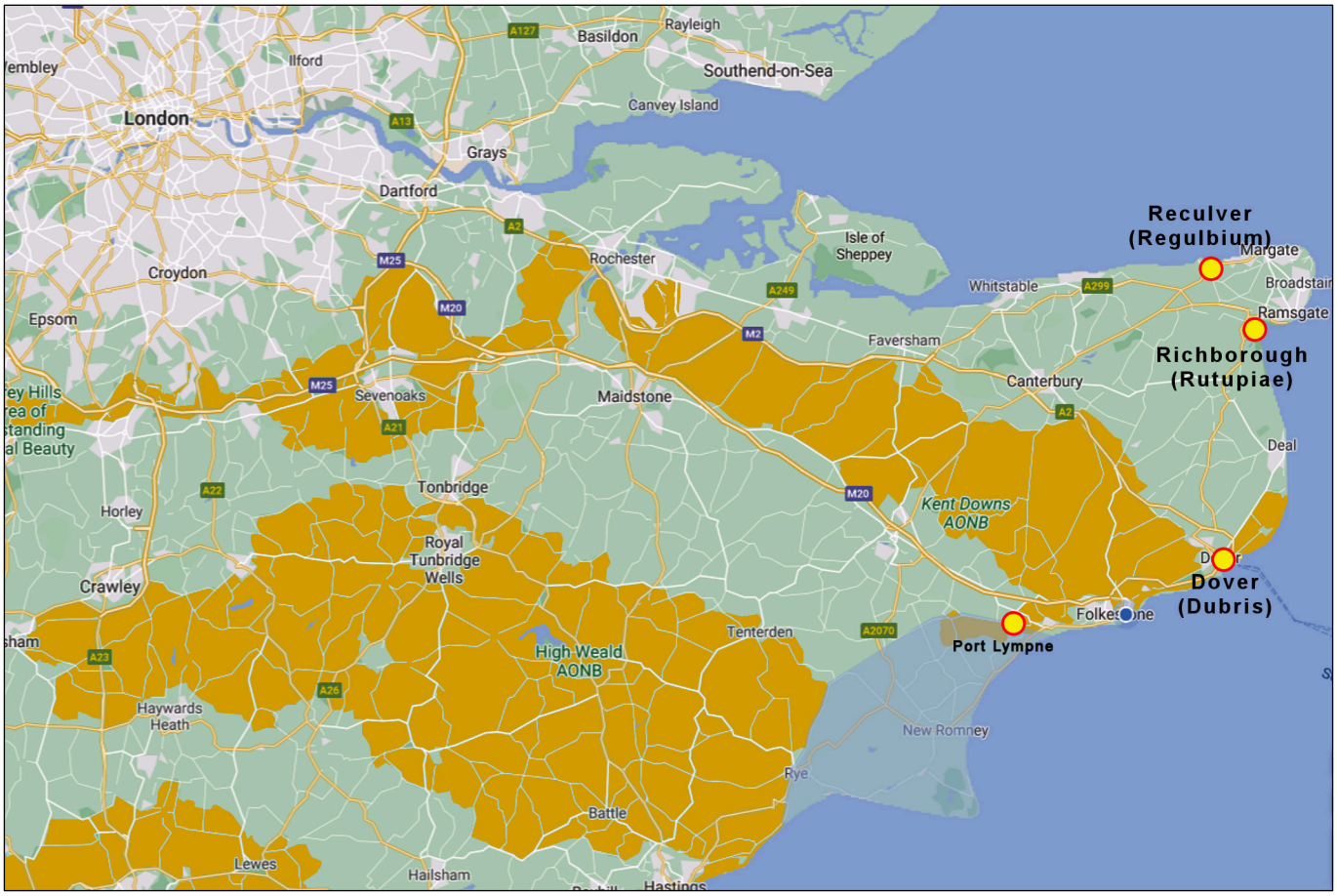
The "open and level shore" is generally accepted to be at Deal but some scholars (and even one local fishermen who had studied the time and tides) are convinced that the topography described in the first paragraph is that of Folkestone. Even if it is not, though, the description shows how the high cliffs there would have been important to any defence of it.

So, we are starting our examination of local defences with that Roman invasion. At the time, the Romans were the dominant military super-power whose influence held sway all over the Mediterranean and well beyond.

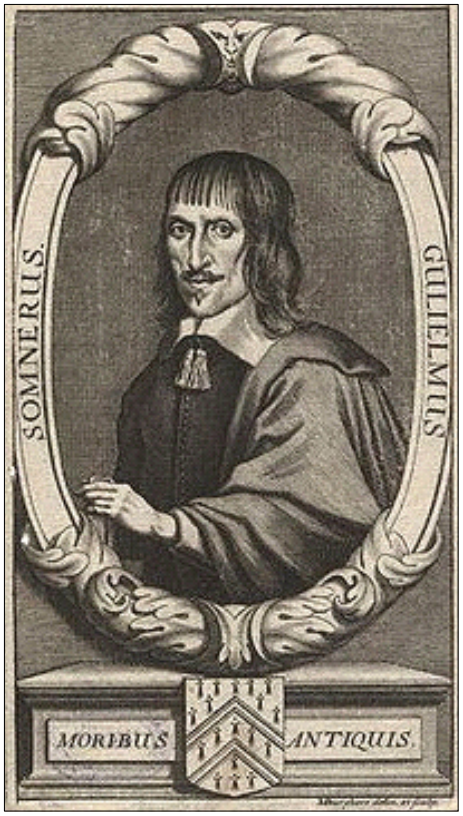
Their legendary military conquests were backed up with a well-developed strategy for keeping their subjugated nations under control. The only race to stand against them with any success were the Scots and Emperor Hadrian eventually had to build a wall across the North of the country to keep them out.

In the Notitia Dignitatum, a written record of Roman military dispositions dated to around 395 CE, is a description of the "Saxon Shore" Command, in which, nine forts were listed- Portchester, Pevensey, Lympne, Dover, Richborough, Reculver, Burgh Castle, Bradwell and Brancaster. The ones in Kent are shown on the map below.

There are a number of different theories about why they were built and it would seem to be obvious that Dover and Port Lympne were being used as deep water ports for trading but these fortifications weren't built just to house their troops, they were put there for the same reason that every other fortification has been put there ever since - to guard against invasion! But here we have the mightiest military empire of the time and region, an empire that had conquered the rest of Europe, including the coast just across the channel, so just who would be brave or foolish enough to attack them?



The Saxon Shore Roman forts built along the coast of Kent



"A treatise of the Roman ports and forts in Kent"

William Somner 1693

As the power and influence of the Roman Empire wanes during the 3rd century CE the defences at these ports become more important. Saxon and Frankish raiders started snapping at the heels of the Romans like wolves circling a wounded animal- dashing in and taking a bite as the opportunity presented. They started raiding the coast in search of plunder from a comparatively wealthy trading nation. The growth of Christianity and religious orders also meant that there were potentially rich pickings from their treasures as well.

The ruins of the Villa that were found on the East cliffs of the Folkestone shows that there was a Roman presence in the town, so it would seem inconceivable that they wouldn't have provided military defences of some kind to deny raiders an easy route into the rich pickings at Canterbury and a way to attack the ports of Dover and Lympne from the rear. Folkestone also had a landing place that was particularly well-suited to flat-bottomed, Viking long-ships.

In Dover, the Romans erected a pharos on the high ground to the East of the harbour (now inside Dover Castle) and another on the high ground to the West (later called the Western Heights). These had three functions:

- Watchtowers to keep a lookout for raiders
- Lighthouses to guide mariners into the harbour at night
- Beacons to signal to the other pharos in Dover and across the channel to Cape Gris Nez

The obvious answer would be to provide a similar arrangement in Folkestone and a number of historians have suggested that is exactly what happened. In his "A treatise of the Roman ports and forts in Kent" in 1693, William Somner says:

"St Gildas (6th century monk/historian) tells us of 'the Romans erecting on this coast, at convenient distances, Watch-towers for such uses as I have intimated, that of espial and discovery.'

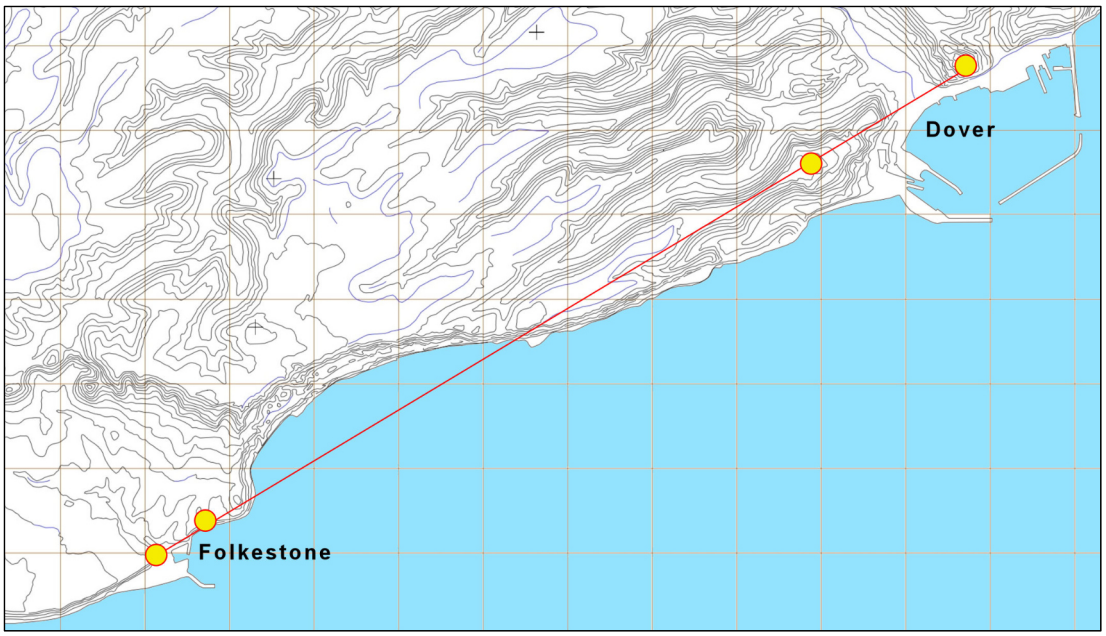
So he; and with him Venerable Bede. 'And of these Watch-towers, our County had five in number, one at Reculver, a second here at Richborough, a third at Dover, a fourth at Folkstone, and a fifth at Limne or Lim-hill, of all which hereafter in due place.'."

The Roman pharos at Dover Castle

Another, earlier historian, John Leland, in his "Itinerary" of 1535 opines:

"But so it is. The Pharos that guided the. Roman mariner has been swept away, the solemn old nunnery has been devoured by the sea, churches and castles have fallen into the waves, while a few stones, a fragment of wall, or even a few lumps a mortar, are all that remain of any of those huiklings that were the glory of the ancient town."

The trouble is that all physical evidence of these pharoi has long since disappeared. Folkestone's western pharos fell victim to the cliffs that were washed away over the years but there are footprints in the landscape that suggest that it would have been somewhere above where the Grand Burstin Hotel now stands. Folkestone's Eastern pharos, on the other side of the harbour, has also gone but footprints in the landscape suggest that it would have stood on the triangle to the East of St. Andrews.



The Saxon Shore line of Pharoi between Folkestone and Dover on a contour map of the area to show inter-visibility.

The height of the structures above the ground they stand on needs to be taken into account in this consideration.

One piece of evidence that supports this contention is shown on the contour diagram above that shows all four pharoi would have been in direct line of sight of each other, meaning that they could have been used as signal beacons to warn of the approach of raiders- by column of smoke during the day or by a change of the colour of the flames from the night-time lighthouse. All four would have been able to summon help from across the Channel by the same means. The military response to the raiders would probably been a naval one, aimed at preventing the raiders from landing, in which case, there would be no need to enclose the town (if one actually existed at that time) with walls.

The Anglo-Saxon settlement of Britain

This was the process which changed the language and culture of most of what became England from Romano-British to Germanic, which started with the withdrawal of the Romans around 410 CE. In this case, there was no large military "invasion" as such but the Jutes, Angles, and Saxons, quickly established control over modern-day England by a process of infiltration and immigration.

The departure of the Romans was followed by the establishment of the Kentish kingdoms in the south and east of Britain. King Vortiger seems to have hired the Saxons as mercenaries to counter the threat of invasions from the Picts in the first half of the fifth century. In return for their service, they were given land for settlement but, realising their strength compared with those that had hired them, they rebelled and encouraged others to follow them. At a local level, this slow invasion could not be countered by building static defences so there was no need for town walls to be built.

There has been some suggestion that King Eadbald built a castle on what is now the Bayle, a church and a nunnery for his daughter Eanswythe. Roman remains have been found on the Bayle so it is possible that either or both made use of any structures that were left on site by the Romans.

The word "castle" is a French word that only came into use during the 11th century with the evolution of the kind of defensive structure that we associate with the Normans. Anglo-Saxon fortifications, unless they re-purposed an abandoned Roman one, are better described as "hilltop stockades" surrounded by earthen banks and ditches.

Viking raids and invasions

These originated in the 8th Century and continued until the Norman Conquest in 1066. Because they came from the Scandinavian countries, the larger scale invasion attempts were concentrated on the Northern and Eastern shores. Any smaller raids towards the South coast were confronted at sea by the fledgling confederation that evolved into the Cinque Ports.

Once again no need for static defences or town walls to counter this threat.

The Norman Conquest

The ongoing issues with the Vikings continued until 1066, when the Earl of Wessex, Harold Godwinson assumed the throne of England amid much opposition, especially from William the Bastard (later to be known as William the Conqueror). While Harold marched North to meet an invasion by the Norwegian king Harald Hardrada, William landed his army in Sussex, intent on seizing the throne of England, which he did at the Battle of Hastings in 1066.

After the conquest, William made a list of everything in the country (the "Doomsday Book") and parcelled out lands to those that had supported him in his campaign. Folkestone was among the royal estates seized and it was granted to Odo, bishop of Bayeux, Earl of Kent and half-brother of William I.

About four years after the taking of the above survey, the bishop was disgraced, and all his possessions confiscated to the crown, After which, Nigel de MuneVille, a descendant of William de Arcis, mentioned before in Domesday, appears to have become possessed of the lordship of Folkestone. At around the same time a castle was built on the cliff, enclosing the minster. This is the area known since as "The Bayle".

Norman Castles were built all over the country, not just on the coast, and the fact that they were is a clear indication that their purpose had more to do with the suppression of a conquered nation than it did with preventing invasion from abroad. A parallel can be drawn with the Allied occupation of Germany after the Second World War.

To do this, the Normans built fortified, domineering structures on the high ground that dominated the parcels of land handed to nobles as a reward for their services in the invasion. The clever part of the arrangement was that those new "Lords of the Manor" were also charged with keeping their manors under control.

Part of this domination may well have included the enclosure of towns within walls, where the Lord of the Manor exercised and demonstrated his power by controlling access and egress from the town.

So, it is quite likely that this was the time that Folkestone received its first set of walls. Determining the layout of these walls requires some speculation over the nature of the town's topography and what kind of a castle was built. Unfortunately, nothing of that original castle remains, so we have to look for clues to what may have been there.

In general, there were two possibilities: a stone-built mott and bailey or a defensible manor house. A mott and bailey would be the romantic option but there is no evidence remaining of one, either in terms of material or a footprint on the landscape. The high point in that locality is that occupied by the town cross and the moot stone that preceded it. If there was a mott, it had to have been built somewhere else on what is now called "The Bayle", but there is no sign of it. Neither is there any indication of where the builders got the soil or stone to build it with- unless, of course, it was dismantled and put back into the hole whence it came. It is also unlikely that someone would build this kind of military installation enclosing an existing religious settlement

The ruins of Corfe Castle in Dorset after its deliberate demolition

without evicting them first.

At this point, it is worth considering the example of Corfe Castle in Dorset (shown above). During the Civil War, the castle withstood sustained attacks by the Cromwellian Army and only fell after an act of treachery. Rather than allow it to stand as a symbol of Royalist resistance an Act of Parliament was passed at Wareham to destroy the castle. A Captain Hughes of Lulworth was given the job of demolishing it. His sappers dug deep holes packed with gunpowder to bring the towers and ramparts crashing down, resulting in the yawning gaps and crazy angles we see today.

This deliberate, leisurely, peacetime demolition failed to reduce the castle to pieces any smaller than those seen in the picture, and these must have been considered too much trouble to remove from the site, so, just like hundreds of Norman Castles and ruins around the country, they are still there more than a millennium later.

Numerous historians have said that *"the greater part of it (Folkestone) was burnt by the united forces of the Scotch and French in 1378"*. Stone battlements don't burn, so where are the remains of Folkestone castle if it was a stone mott and bailey? Even if the local inhabitants had carried off the stone to use elsewhere, where is the mott and bailey footprint?

So, the alternative, a defensible manor house or "manoir", seems much more likely and a good example is that of Lympne Castle (shown opposite).

From Wikipedia:

> *"A manor house is a country house, which historically formed the administrative centre of a manor, the lowest unit of territorial organisation in the feudal system in Europe. A manor house was the dwelling house, or "capital messuage", of a feudal lord of a manor. Legal trials or sessions of his "court baron", or manor court, were held in the Great Hall of the Manor House.*
>
> *A lord might posses a number of manors, each of which would typically have a manor house. So each manor house might have been occupied only on occasional visits. Sometimes a steward or seneschal was appointed by the seigneurial lord to oversee and manage his different manorial properties. The day-to-day administration was delegated to a bailiff, or reeve.*
>
> *Although not typically built with strong fortifications as castles were, many manor-houses were partly fortified: they were enclosed within walls or ditches that often included the farm buildings as well.*

The speculation that Folkestone castle was just a manoir that was referred to as such, is supported Edward Hasted in his *"The History and Topographical Survey of Kent "*,

The defensible manor house- Lympne Castle

The first castle was built in the 1080's for the Archdeacons of Canterbury on the edge of a cliff looking over the Romney Marshes.

It was rebuilt in the 14th century by a building with a tower at each end.

www.ecastles.co.uk/lympne.html

published in 1799 , in which he says:

> *"Soon after which it appears to have paired into the family of Clinton, for William de Clinton, Earl of Huntingdon, who .... died possessed of it in the 28th year of that reign, at which time the mansion of this manor bore the name of 'the castle'."*

At Folkestone, the manorial enclosure also encompassed the religious institutions that had stood on the site since King Eadbald's time and these remained in situ until the monks asked to be moved to a new site outside the castle walls in 1138- the site of the current parish church. Whether the castle walls and the town walls are the same thing will be explored later on.

The Hundred Years' War (1337-1453)

The war began principally because of a dispute between King Edward III of England and Philip VI of France over feudal rights in Gascony. The war was not continuous but consisted of a series of skirmishes, raids and battles, both here and in France, although there was a rising threat of a major invasion in 1386.

In 1385, Charles VI of France began to prepare for an invasion of England, assembling ships, stores, men and equipment in the Low Countries and Brittany. The threat never materialised but the British had to make preparations to counter it, which must have included the defences of Folkestone.

There were two major developments which contributed to those preparations.

Firstly, the granting of a charter to incorporate the town in 1313, which shifted the responsibility for the defence of the town (and, as outlined earlier, the country) away

from the Feudal Lord towards the Mayor and Jurats of the town. With no standing army, the actual defence would fall to the local militia raised by the town, although there is some indication that "outsiders" were also being sent to the area to help with the defence. From www.gatehouse-gazetteer.info/Indexs/EngCounty/Kent.html, quoting the Royal rolls of 9th July 1377:

> *To John de Clynton.*
>
> *Order upon his allegiance to repair with his household to Folkestone castle by him held near the sea and there abide with power of men at arms, armed men and archers in his company sufficient to defend the same, and to be in person at Westminster at the king's coronation to perform the services due for his lands, performed by his ancestors of old time; as the king's enemies of France with a mighty fleet of ships and galleys are hastening to invade divers parts of England and especially the county of Kent, as the king has learned.*

Clear indication, perhaps, that the feudal lord had deserted his manor after granting a charter to the town.

The second development to have an impact on the town defences was the introduction of gunpowder artillery in Europe in around 1324. As the 1698 map below shows, Folkestone harbour was eventually covered by three artillery batteries located, as pointed out earlier, each side of the gap into the Pent Valley.

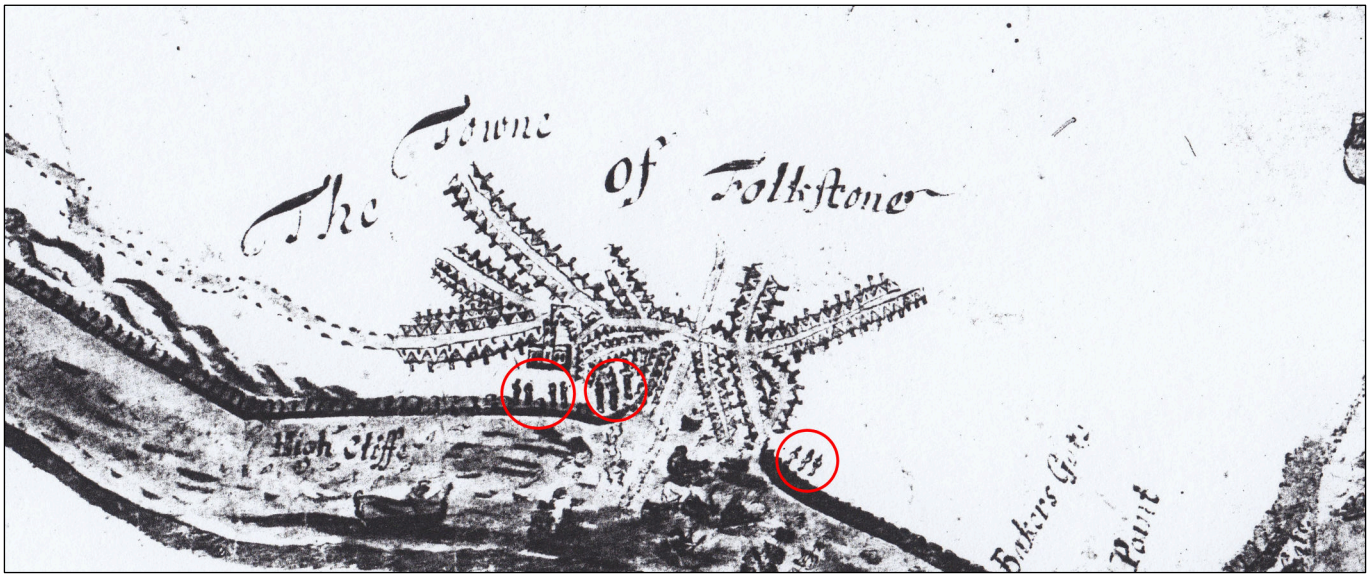
The date for the provision of these batteries is unknown but it was obviously after 1324 and before 1698, the most likely time being to meet the threats during the 100-Year War era in the 14th Century. These guns were intended to engage and destroy any invading fleet as far out to sea as possible- a firing range only limited by the available artillery technology of the time.

Thus the first objective of any invading army was to attack and destroy those guns before the main fleet attempted to land, a principle still applied to every beach landing in the Second World War- especially the D-day landings in Normandy. Small, lightly-armed and fast moving detachments would land ahead of the main body to neutralise the artillery batteries before the main fleet arrived.

To counter this threat, in Folkestone. additional static defences (town walls) were provided, just as much, if not more, for the protection of the guns than they were for the protection of the town. The town, after all, consisted of a fishing village on the

1698 Radnor Estate map showing the artillery defences:

1. Church Battery (left)
2. Bayle Battery (middle)
3. Durlocks Battery (right)



Stade and a small town at the top- neither of any great importance to an invader more concerned with the access the harbour gave to the heartland of the nation.

In a time long before any form of airborne landing was possible, any such "commando raid" would have to be by a small-scale landing on the Stade followed by a rush for the gap into the Pent Valley. So, any new static defences would have to be provided across that gap and, as already stated, the most likely time for this was in readiness for the expected French invasion in 1386. These walls were separate from the town walls surrounding the town and manor at the top of the hill.

Those walls were the responsibility of the town council and would have involved considerable expense. Elsewhere, this finance would have been raised by what was called "murage" (derived from the French word for wall) but there is no entry on the Court rolls (see Http://www.gatehouse-gazetteer.info) for such a charter being granted to Folkestone.

However, S. J. Mackie in his *"A description and historical account of Folkestone and its neighbourhood",* in 1856 reports that for towns that are members of the Cinque Ports:

> *"The inhabitants were free from many of the taxes imposed on other towns, were exempt from tolls, panage, pontage, murage, scot and scutage, also from suits of counties and hundreds, views of frank pledge, etc.*
>
> *They were entitled to all waif and stray goods, wrecks, treasure trove, the chattels of felons, and fines for all kinds of misdemeanours, and their soldiers and sailors claimed the van in battle, and the post of honour in all dangers..."*

So, there is no indication of where the money came from to build these walls, although Mackie goes on to say that in the later build up to the Spanish Armada:

> *"Money was continually being collected "to bye powder and matche for the defence of our towne, and for the selected shouldyers universally levied of all men in this towne"*

That might suggest that the money for the walls came from the townsfolk themselves although orders made in January 1385[1] said that "*1d (one penny) was to be levied from every seller of every basket of fish"*; that *"3d was to be levied on very noble's worth of fish landed at Folkestone";* and that *"the proceeds to be expended on defence of ports and country adjacent"*. The money for the walls may have been raised this way.

The guns were provided by the Crown but were manned by townsfolk trained and drilled by Dover Castle.

Henry VIII's coastal defences

The next invasion threat to face the nation and the town, which has any relevance to Folkestone's town walls was that faced by King Henry VIII. In February 1539 Thomas Cromwell ordered certain *'sadde and expert men of every shire in Ingland beyng nere the see… to viewe all the places alongest the secost wher any daunger of invasions ys like to be and to certifie the sayd daungers and also best advises for the fortificacion thereof'*.

It had become clear by this time, that solid stone walls were particularly vulnerable to round shot from cannonballs, so the "Device Forts" that he built in Sandgate and Deal, utilised deep earthen banks behind the walls to absorb the impact of shot. The

1. Calendar of Patent Rolls 1381 Edward III- 13th January

Collated by Eamonn Rooney from a group of index cards compiled by the late C. P. Davies, former reference librarian at Folkestone Public Library.

absence of any such fortifications in Folkestone is a reasonable indication that, apart from repairs to the existing ones, there was no further work on the town walls after the Hundred Years War.

So, the indications are that there was one set of walls built to encompass the Norman manor house and another set of walls built to resist a probable invasion by the French in the 14th/15th century. The following chapters speculate where those walls were and explores the evidence supporting that contention.

=✲=

Murage

As the responsibility for building and/or repairing town walls or defences moved from Feudal Lords to civil local authorities, even if those defences were provided for the benefit of the nation as a whole, the town also had to find the money to pay for the work to be carried out.

This could place an excessive financial burden on the town coffers so those towns could, effectively, (in modern day terms) apply for a grant from the Crown. However, the money didn't actually come from the Royal coffers either. Instead, the king granted letters patent to the town to allow them to levy "murage", which was a medieval toll for the building or repair of town walls in England, Wales and Ireland.

These "grants" were given for a limited term, but the walls were frequently not completed within the term, so that the grant was periodically renewed. The grants were intended to pay for the repair and maintenance of walls but some councils abused the system by using the money for other projects.

Some of the walls were probably enclosing towns for the first time. Others, such as at Worcester, were extensions to walls in order to bring suburbs inside the town, or to fund the repair of existing walls, as was the case at Canterbury, to which murage was granted in 1378, 1379, 1385, 1399 and 1402.

The grants themselves were actually quite simple. For example, a grant of 1325 says:

> *"Grant to the burgesses of the town of Kyngeston upon Hull of murage for three years to finish the wall and ditch, which by the king's command they have begun to enclose their town.*

The grants allowed the town to impose a surtax on goods for sale in their markets and these tended to end up with a long list of specific duty rates on specific goods for a period of a few years but there are important exceptions and specific murage for the particular circumstances of the town.

For instance, the murage at Dover, always a passenger transit port, included a toll on persons and horses and Newcastle upon Tyne was granted additional murage of 1d. (One penny) on a chaldron of coal.

The idea of a tax based on the value of goods does not seem to develop until the mid 13th century.

Based on information from: Murage: An introduction by Philip Davis on Http://www.gatehouse-gazetteer.info

Historic maps and diagrams

Making use of the only graphic evidence available

This publication relies heavily on a comparison between the information shown on various editions of maps drawn up over the years so it is worth outlining some of the background to them.

The earliest maps available are those held by the Radnor estate dating from the first quarter of the 17th century. In those days, map makers had to draw them by hand, a long, slow and complicated process, so they only included what was necessary to satisfy the people commissioning them in the first place.

If a customer asked for a map of the land that they owned, you only drew boundaries. If they wanted to know what was on the land that they owned, then you added buildings and/or other features. Modern maps, with the benefit of technology tend to show everything that's there rather than the bits that have been asked for.

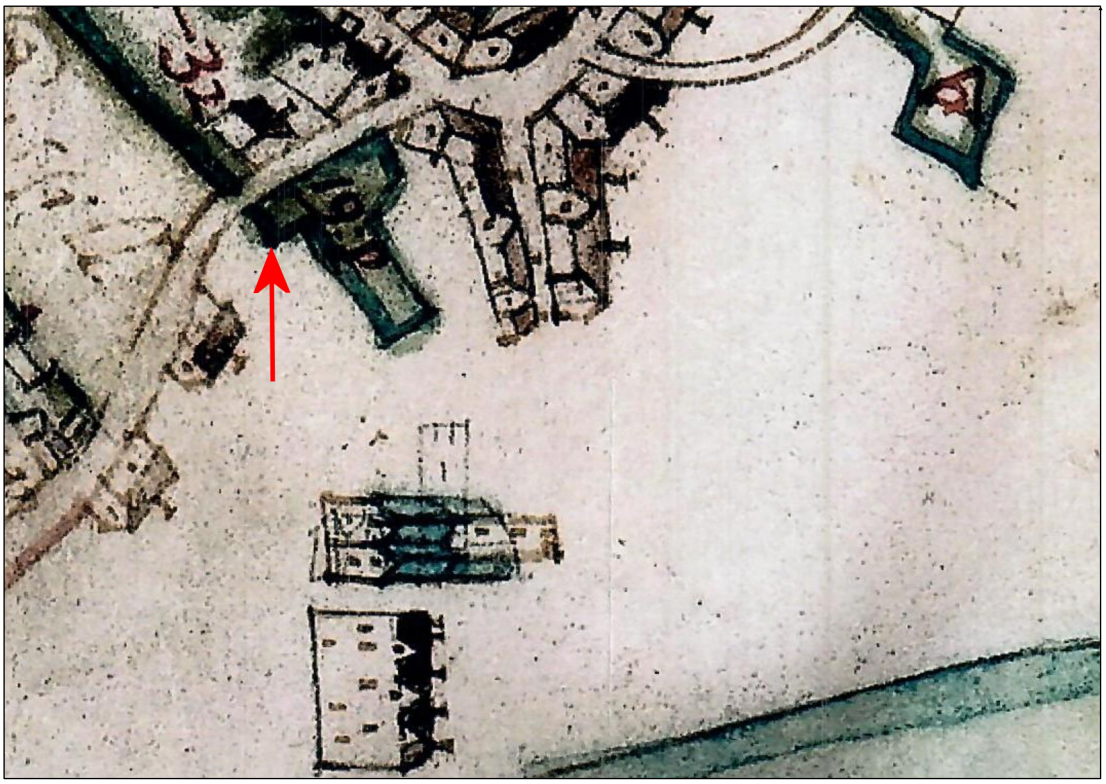
The ancient map maker and/or surveyor also had to draw everything from what Google maps now call a "street view", it is not surprising if he has included very little detailed information from back gardens or enclosed areas – simply because he could not see what lay behind the buildings he drew from the front.

This might explain why these early maps may appear to disagree over what is shown.

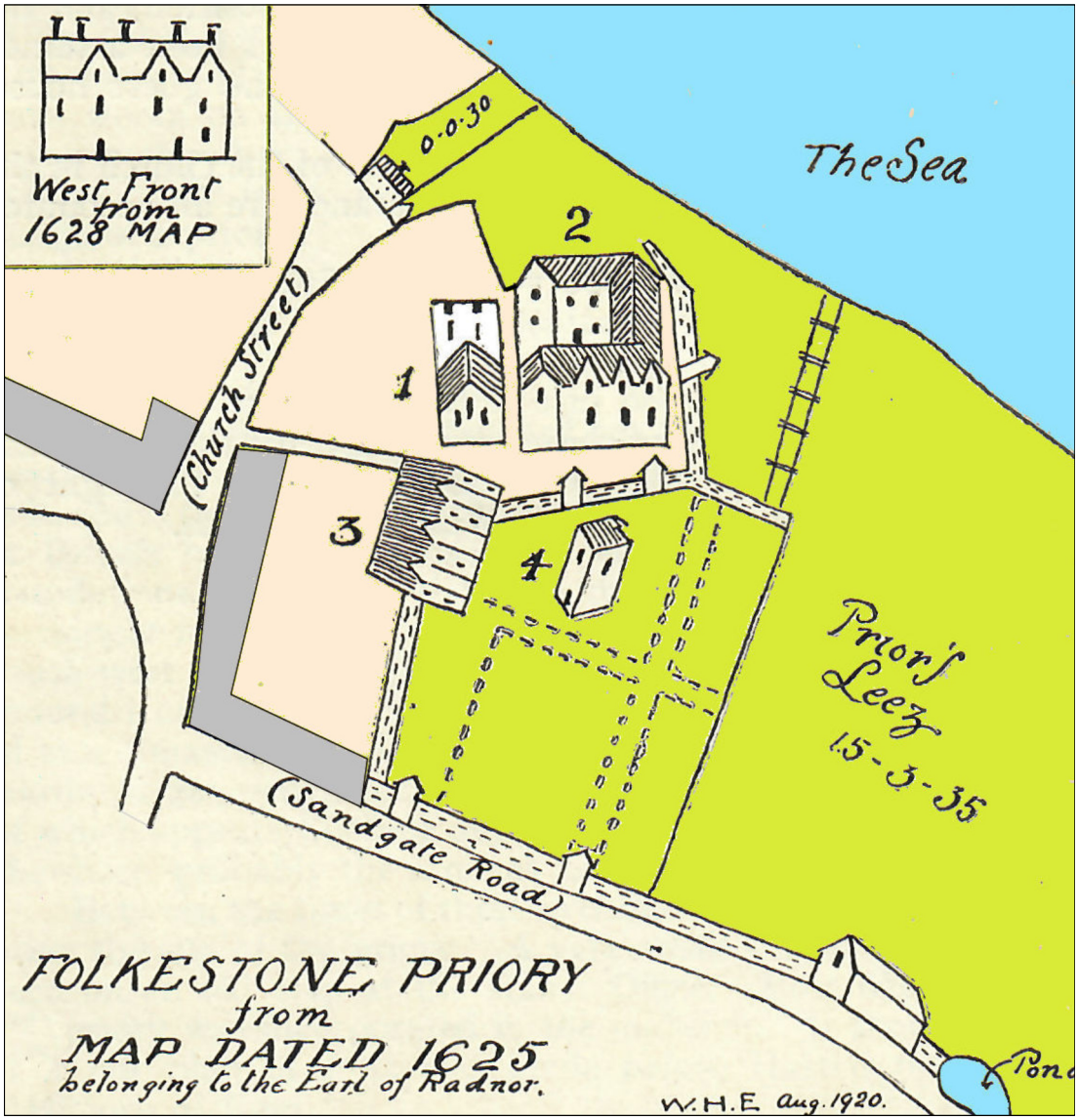
1625

There are two maps dating from 1625, the first of which is shown below

The purpose of this survey and map seems to have been to catalogue the land and assets that the Dixwell family owned so a greater degree of detail would not have been needed at this stage.



The 1625 Dixwell estate map showing, outlined in green, the lands not part of his estate.



William Henry Elgar's copy of the 1625 map in his 1921 book – "The Ancient Buildings of Folkestone District" s

The thick green lines show the boundaries of land that is, presumably, not owned by them hence the lack of the kind of detail shown on the later 1698 map. The map does, however, show a couple of interesting things.

Firstly, that there are only a couple of buildings at top of Church Street and, secondly, that the land outlined in green belongs to someone else and, therefore, must be outside the priory wall. It is possible that the small square indicated abuts the corner of the priory wall on Sandgate Road, shown overleaf.

Another estate map from 1625, apparently commissioned to show the priory boundary, is not available to include here but it has been redrawn and included in Elgar's book (shown above). Elgar's intention was to show the priory, so he didn't include the buildings shown on the previous map at the top of Church Street. I have put these back in (shown in grey) and coloured the illustration for clarity, with priory lands shown in green.

Unfortunately, Elgar was more concerned with creating an illustration for his book than he was with accuracy and made a pretty poor effort to copy the original estate map. Little did he know that his illustration was the only one available to the public at large and would, therefore, become the de facto map of the priory.

In particular, he has:

- Created the gate shown just above the pigeon house (4) from a tree on the original

- Not shown the paths correctly
- Failed to link the path with the other gate in the wall above the pigeon house
- Shown the “guest house” straddling the wall.

He has also perpetuated the error made on the estate map as well, which shows the sloping wall above the pigeon house meeting the wall from Sandgate Road at a junction with the alley from Church Street. Later maps will show this to be an impossibility.

This map shows that there is a wall along Sandgate Road that extends as far as the Pound and the pond alongside it. The actual estate map shows that the “Prior’s Leez” extending a lot further to the right as we will see later.

The junction of the wall with the building in Sandgate Road is almost certainly the junction with the “T” shaped plot on the map above.

1698

This map appears to have been commissioned to show just what was included in the manor acquired by the Radnor family. It is the most detailed map that the Radnor estate has from the time.

Relevant sections of it are included later on in this article but it should be noted that it includes the same priory boundary as shown on Elgar’s illustration, although by the time that his map was drawn, the priory is long gone and we should, perhaps, be talking about the land that belonged with the manor house that replaced it. Equally, the church and churchyard had already passed into different hands by then.

1769

John Andrews, Andrew Drury, William Herbert published *"A Topographical Map of the County of Kent in Twenty Five Sheets on a scale of Two Inches to a Mile from an actual survey in which are expressed all the roads, lanes, churches, towns and villages"*

The relevant sheet, shown on the above, is *“A map of the hundreds of Loningborough and Folkestone”*, which contains a remarkable amount of detail for such a large scale, even when enlarged the degree included later.

1782

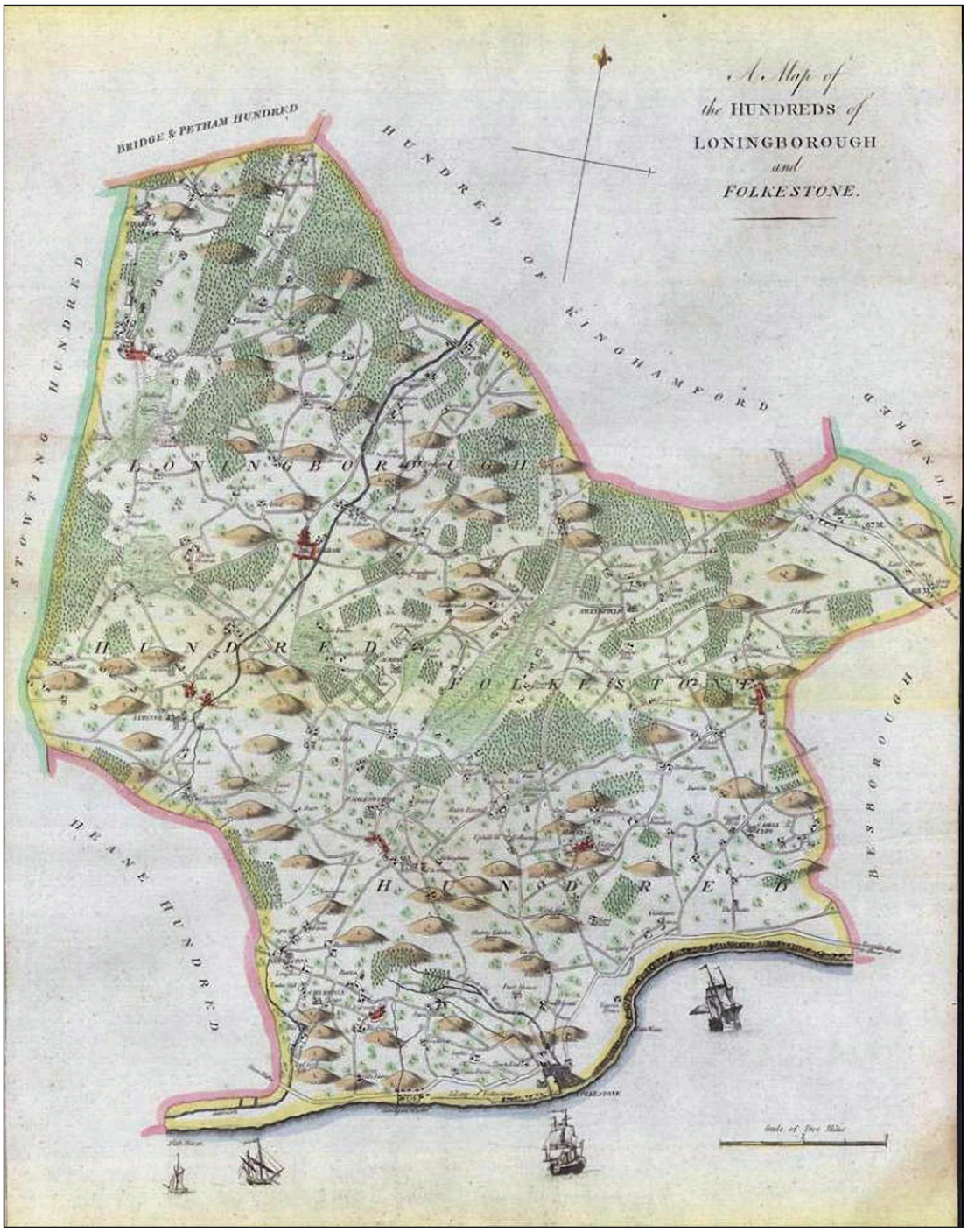
Another survey carried out for the Folkestone Estate by John Powell and the first one include the level of detail that we have come to expect from modern maps.

There are some anomalies with St Eanswythe’s water that are relevant to the location of the boundary wall and these are discussed later on.

1872

The first Ordnance Survey of the area was published in 1801 but contained insufficient detail of the area to help with the location of the priory wall. By the time we get to the 1872 version, bottom of the next page, the transition has been made from showing what the person commissioning the map wants to see, to showing what is actually there.

This does give some apparent clashes with earlier maps over what is shown but does at least allow us to stabilise the boundary wall and give a pattern that can be



Andrews, Drury and Herbert's

"A Topographical Map of the County of Kent in Twenty Five Sheets on a scale of Two Inches to a Mile from an actual survey in which are expressed all the roads, lanes, churches, towns and villages"

Map based on the 1872 Ordnance Survey, colourised for clarity

superimposed on subsequent maps to show how the wall is gradually absorbed by the

Getting back to basics

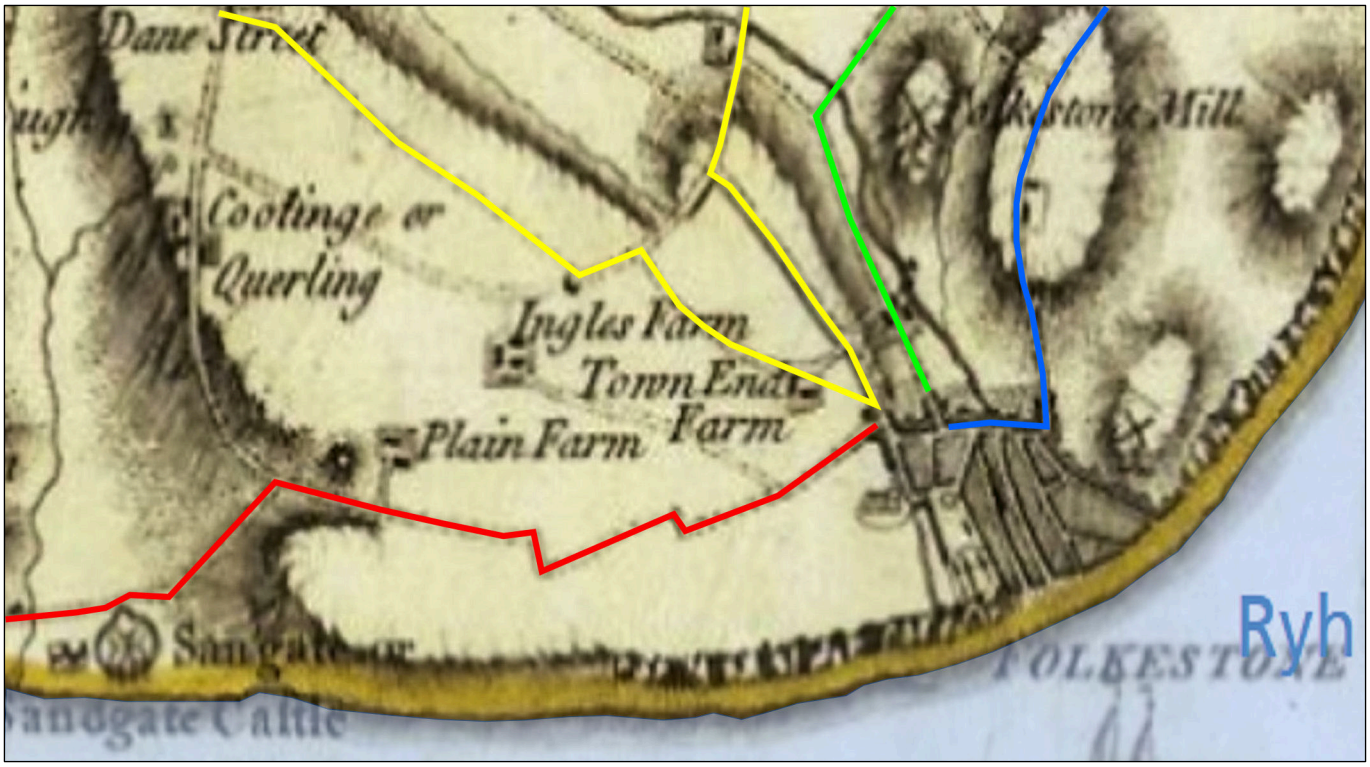
How town walls work

Any investigation into where Folkestone's town walls and gates were, with very little physical evidence remaining, has to go back to the basic principles of fortification, even though this might be over-stating the obvious:

1. If you want to protect a place from the bad guys, you build a wall around it.
2. The trouble is that if you build that wall to stop the bad guys, you stop the good guys getting in as well
3. So you leave gaps in the wall to let the good guys in but that means that the bad guys can still get in as well
4. To let the good guys in but keep the bad guys out, you put a door or gate at the gap and open it for the good guys but shut it for the bad guys
5. If you have a door or gate you have to put someone there to open and close it and to decide who are the good guys and who are the bad guys. In peaceful times, you only need a few security staff to do the job but in times of war you need to reinforce the gate guards and provide extra personnel to stop the bad guys from coming over the walls instead.
6. A gate-guard would consist of a number of men, although only one or two would be manning the gate at any one time. Those not actually on the gate would wait in the "guard room", just inside the gate, until it was their turn or until called upon to assist those on the gate if there was trouble.
7. If the only way through the wall is through a gate, eventually you wear away a path through it

Opposite: Not all medieval town gates had to be the full barbican as the picture of The Château du Haut-Kœnigsbourg, a medieval castle in Alsace, France shows

The modern, largely ceremonial gate guard at St Jame's Palace London, which epitomises the way that castle or town gates would have looked in medieval times



The ancient routes into town superimposed onto the 1769 map of Kent produced by Andrew, Drury and Herbert

8. If the path was there before the wall was built, that would naturally be where the gate would be put.

All of which is a long-winded way of saying that, if the gates have long-since fallen victim the ravages of time and have disappeared, their lost locations can be found by looking for the paths that went through them when they were there. Once you have found the gates, it is relatively easy to find the layout of the walls between them.

The ancient routes into town

There were, and still are four main routes into the town, as shown on the map above. All the modern improvements, especially the M20 Motorway, generally feed into one of those routes above.

Route	Comments
Red	Originally called Cow Street but now the Sandgate Road. Most likely the newest route into town since the coastal route through Sandgate wouldn't have existed in Roman times due to the shape of the coastline then.
Blue	The western part of the Roman road network between Port Lympne and Dover. Currently Harbour Way has been renamed a number of times in its history. Previously, Eastbrook Street, Dover Lane and Dover Street. In the post Roman era, the track in from Capel-Le-Ferne and Hougham to the moot for the Folkestone Hundred
Green	The Roman road to Canterbury from Folkestone. Currently Rendezvous Street, Grace Hill, Foord Road. The section of this ancient track between The Red Cow and Hawkinge has been lost over the years. In the post Roman era, the track in from Hawkinge, Alkham, Swingfield and Lydden to the moot for the Folkestone Hundred

Route	Comments
Yellow	Made up from the Roman road to Port Lympne and local track from Broadmead. Currently Guildhall Street and Bournemouth Road. The last section of the Roman road between Cheriton Road and Guildhall Street has been lost under the modern road at the end of Middleburg Square and the ASDA development. Projecting the line of this route to meet Guildhall Street confirms the location of a gate there. In the post Roman era, the track in from Newington and Cheriton to the moot for the Folkestone Hundred

The gates

The Roman and Anglo-Saxon eras preceded the Norman Conquest, as did the routes identified above, so any attempt to enclose the town with walls would have to take this into account and provide gates where these routes crossed the walls.

On page 45 of his *"A description and historical account of Folkestone and its neighbourhood",* in 1856, S. J. Mackie identifies six gates and tries to approximate their locations: This investigation has identified a couple more.

Mackie also differentiates between "Great gates" and "Little gates" which might refer to the full barbican similar to the one shown for St Jame's Palace above for the former and either a smaller or simpler gate for the latter, like the medieval one shown in Alsace.

Gate	Name	Route	Type	Date
1	West gate	Red	Great	11th century
2	Shorelands gate	Yellow	Great	11th century
3	Copthill gate	Green	Great	11th century
4	Bankers gate	Blue	Great(?)	11th century
5	Nether gate		Little	11th century
6	Lower gate	blue	Great(?)	14th century
7	Sea gate	blue	Great(?)	14th century

The walls

Each section of wall that sits between two gates has been identified and listed separately below so that it can be described more accurately.

Once again, to overstate the obvious, any combination of walls and gates must form a complete enclosure of some kind, otherwise they would be pointless. Similarly, they must create some kind of barrier and that barrier must face the enemy not the defenders.

As already stated, the walls of the manoir would have been more intended to be enclosing walls more than they would have been defensive. As a result, they would have been of a lighter construction like those of Lympne Castle, shown at the top of the next page.

The defensive walls of the City of York showing the wall walk and crenellation

The less formidable walls surrounding Lympne Castle and the kind possibly enclosed Folkestone

Those built for the 100-Years War were a defensive barrier and would have been more solidly built and included fighting elements like those of the City of York shown above.

The walls identified as being with those gates are:

Wall	Name	Between gates	Type
1	Priory Wall	Cliff- 1	Enclosing
2	Shellons Wall	1- 2	Enclosing
3	Copthill wall	2-3	Enclosing
4	Bankers wall	3- 4	Enclosing
5	Bayle wall	4- cliff	Enclosing
6	Curtain wall	4- 6	Defensive
7	Tontine wall	6- 7	Defensive
8	Durlocks wall	7- cliff	Defensive
9	Harbour wall	6- seafront	Defensive

All gates and walls will be discussed individually later on.

The Norman manoir

Enclosing the early town and priory

The most compelling piece of evidence about the existence of a Norman castle of some kind is the oft-repeated legend:

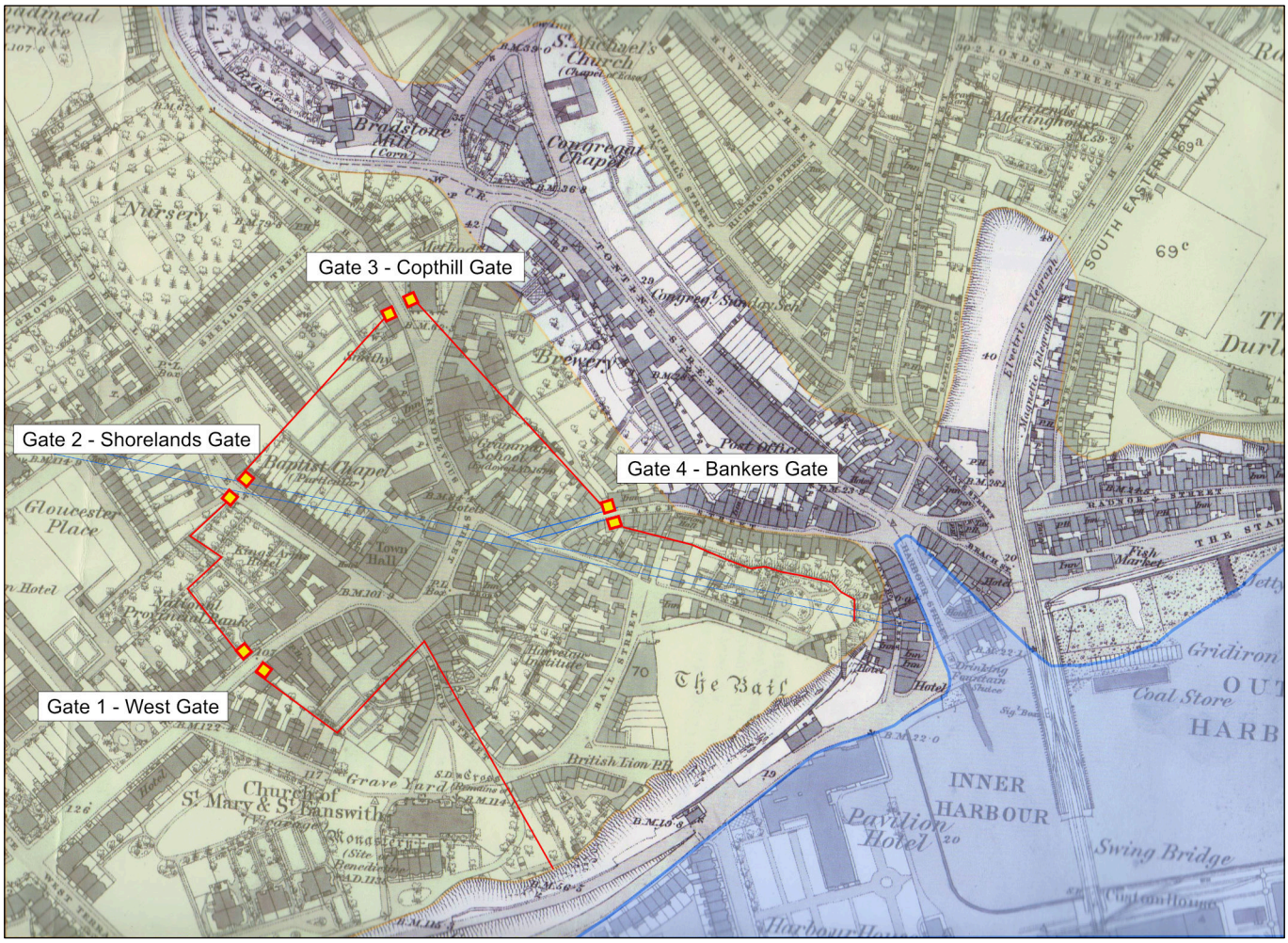
> *"of their own free will, the monks of Folkestone desired to remove from the place within the Castle where they had been founded, to a certain new Church which he had given them,"*

So, this is not so much a quest to find **IF** a castle existed as it is to find out **WHERE** it existed.

From this point onward, all wall layouts suggested by what little evidence does exist, will be shown on a common background map as shown below. This is based on the 1872 Ordnance Survey map which is accurate enough and detailed enough to allow the walls and gates to be seen in a modern context, but old enough to avoid the developments dictated by the growth in traffic to the ferry port. High ground is shown in green and the medieval harbour shown in blue.

For this exercise, the Manoir, its outbuildings and the old priory are assumed to be in the area containing the Harveain Institute, although it could have been anywhere on the modern area called "The Bayle".

It would be natural to wonder why the area enclosed is such a peculiar shape but there



The layout of the Norman castle walls around the town superimposed on a modern map of the town.

The 1628 map showing (outlined in green) those parcels of land that were **not** part of the Dixwell Estate.

are reasonable explanations for this that will be covered later on.

The picture above shows the same boundary overlaid onto a 1628 map drawn up to show the lands that were **not** part of the manorial estate. The green line shows the missing bit of the old Roman road to Port Lympne. Is it a mere coincidence that most of those align with the town walls and gates?

One answer may be that, when the town charter was granted in 1313 and responsibility for the town's defence moved from the Feudal lord to the town corporation, ownership of the land that the town gates (and associated buildings) stood on was transferred to the corporation as well.

Gate 1 - West Gate

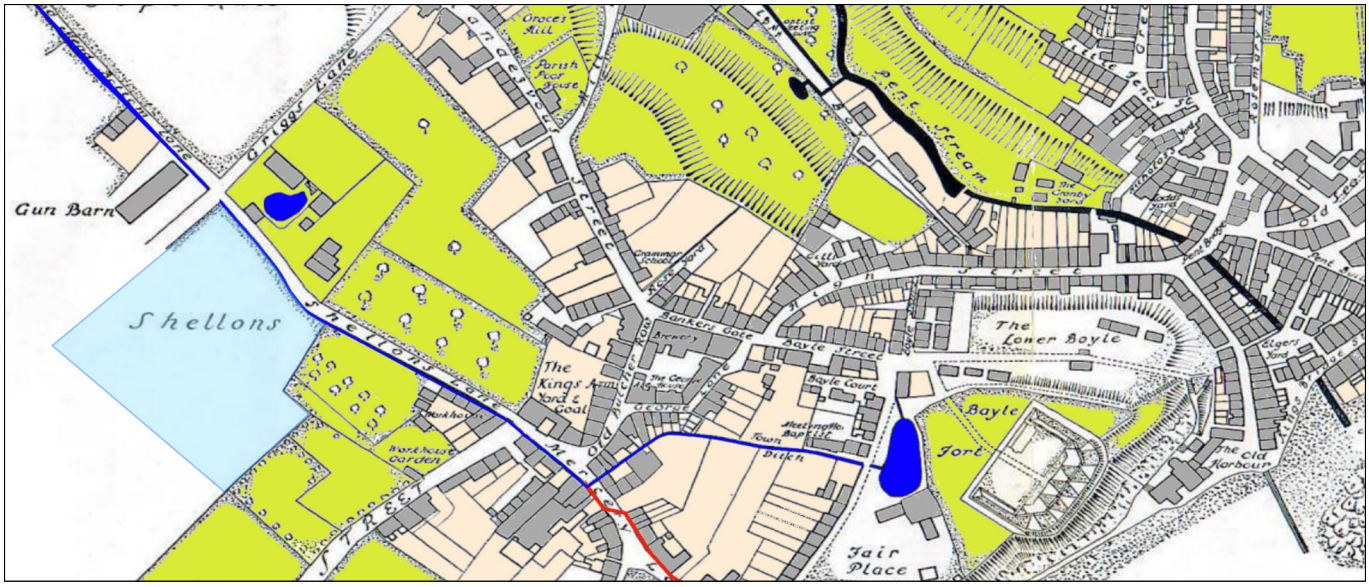
Said by Mackie to be *"near the Town Hall"* and described by others as the *"entrance to the town"*. He also says that it is a "great" gate, which is what you might expect for one of the main entrances into town. This theme is also found in the table of contents on the 1698 Folkestone Estate map which says, *"1, Entrance into the Towne is called Cow Street".* Where there is an entrance, there is likely to be a gate.

The footprints left by a number of ancient and modern boundary lines suggest that, in modern terms, it would have been located where the empty travel agent in Sandgate Road now stands.

This gate would have been in existence before the monks moved outside the castle and, as later discussions will indicate, its presence had an obvious effect on the layout of the new priory grounds. The existence of a piece of priory wall abutting the travel agent building would confirm that the Southern edge of Sandgate Road (Cow Street) is the original edge of the road. The Northern edge has moved when the road has been widened over the years.

Wall 2 - Shellons Wall

No physical remains of this wall have been discovered so far because of the widening



Map of Folkestone based on Powell's survey of 1782

of Sandgate Road with the massive redevelopment of both its frontage and the grounds to the rear of those buildings. Land boundaries tend to follow walls and vice versa so, in the absence of anything more concrete, the only speculation can be that the path of the wall follows the boundary of the piece of land shown in the 1628 map at the top of the previous page

Gate 2 - Shorelands Gate

Lord Radnor's Steward records in his accounts for 1712 that he had expended money for:

> *"Three gates viz. one Great gate and one little Gate on Shorelands and one Great Gate at Copthill"*

This confirms the presence of a gate at Shorelands* but this raises the question of whether the Corporation really did take over responsibility for paying for the town walls when it received its charter in 1313 if Radnor was still paying in 1712.

* At different times and in different documents also referred to as Shorelands, Shellande or Shellons

The 1628 map on the previous page shows that this parcel of land (in blue) was still part of the Dixwell estate, and we can only assume that it still was, as shown in the 1782 map above. So, it might be that the steward was paying for gates on their own lands.

It was suggested earlier that the gates were built over existing paths, so, even if the gate had disappeared, any remaining path might suggest where it used to be and the modern day Guildhall Street, which has been renamed several times over the years, is a particularly good example of this phenomenon.

Guildhall Street, and its predecessors, is a track that follows the route of St Easnswythe's Water into the town and the gate sits at the junction of it and the old Roman road to Port Lympne. The end of this road is gone now but its track towards the gate is shown by the thin blue lines on the map at the bottom of page 25 and the green line on the 1628 map opposite This is also the point at which Guildhall Street bends.

The gate and gates houses have disappeared as the street developed over the years and there are no physical remains other than the footprints left in the built environment.

The Southern end of Copthill Wall emerging from the back walls of the buildings in Guildhall Street.

The remaining bits of wall showing its track across the council car park towards the tree in the distance.

The building immediately to the left of this tree is the back of the Masonic Lodge in Grace Hill

The other end of Copthill Wall behind the masonic lodge showing the tree on the left.

Royal Artillery Soldiers Leaving Folkestone Drill Hall For Lydd, Kent in 1910

Wall 3 - Copthill Wall

This is one of the few town walls with any physical remains and these can be found behind the buildings on northern side of Guildhall Street as shown opposite.

The main part of the wall, where the car parks now stand was lost under the construction of the Territorial Drill Hall shown above. The wall shown on the previous page is out of shot to the left of the picture but in line with the group of people watching the comings and goings.

Gate 3 - Copthill Gate

Situated in Grace Hill where the Masonic Lodge now stands. There are no visible physical remains and it is unlikely that any would be uncovered by any excavation of the lodge site since its construction involved digging out a lower ground floor that was below the ground level at the time as shown in the picture below. Similar developments took place on the other side of the road and the road itself has been widened.

At first sight, this would appear to be an unlikely place for a town gate since these are normally located on an up-slope or on level ground. The suggested site appears to be on a down-slope from the high ground at the roundabout at the end of Shellons Street.

The junction of the town wall and the rear of the masonic lodge

The modern day approach to the site of the Copthill gate from Foord Road

However, this high ground is the result of extensive roadworks in the late 20th century, but measurements show that the Foord Road/Grace Hill junction is at the same altitude as the speculated site for the gate, with a gentle rise between the two of them.

The view approaching the gate from the North is shown in the picture above. The arrow shows the road level before the roundabout was raised. The gate would have been located where the building behind the “no entry” sign was built and would have been visible from the viewpoint.

Wall 4 - Bankers Wall

The track of Bankers wall was dictated, to a large degree, by the local topography. Although built more as an enclosure wall than it was for fortification it had an important role to play in the defence of the manoir as well as the town/country as a whole, purely because of its location.

As the diagram below shows, the high ground to the South of the Pent Stream valley is the natural location for defending against the left flank of any invading army, but any wall built there would present no impediment to those invaders from entering the valley in the first place. This will be covered later.

However, it should be noted that this wall would not have been built to withstand a direct assault since there was nothing behind the wall that would be of any interest to an invader. Rather than fight their way up the steep slope in Payers Park anyone trying to invest the manoir would simply take the easier route to Copthill Gate and assault that instead.

The high ground surrounding the Pent Valley with a line showing the approximate location of the Bankers Wall in red.

The only visible remnants of Bankers Wall that have been absorbed into the rear wall of a Rendezvous Street property

The red line is drawn along the contour line on the map and shows why the wall was there but not its precise location. In reality, the line of this wall is easy to see from the Pent Stream valley (Tontine Street) since it is the upper level of the car park in Payers Park.

The wall follows the upper edge of the ridge that runs horizontally from the Copthill Gate to a point on the High Street at the same altitude, which is where the Bankers Gate was located. A more precise track for the wall is shown on the map on page 25.

Gate 4 - Bankers Gate

Powell's 1782 survey shows that what we now know as The Old High Street was previously called "Bankersgate". Mackie, reporting on the preparations for a possible invasion of the town in 1599 quotes one of the orders made:

> *"....and it is also ordered that all persons inhabyting within this towne shall repaire to the place of randevowe in the towne uppon the ringing of the great bell, if they shalbe within the hearth of the same, uppon paine to be punished at the discretion of the maior and juratts."*

This *"place of randevowe"* (assembly place for the militia) was probably between the Bankers Wall, just discussed, and current Rendezvous Street and is where the name comes from, so it is curious that it was at some time called Bankersgate.

Most of us would naturally assume that the word "banker" is derived from the banking industry in some way and, in a way, it is but is this yet another French language hangover from the Norman period?

To find out, we have to indulge in a bit of word play with the aid of Wikipedia and other online Old-English dictionaries. The word "bank" has a number of meanings but there are only two that concern us in this instance: bank = money institution and bank = earthen mound.

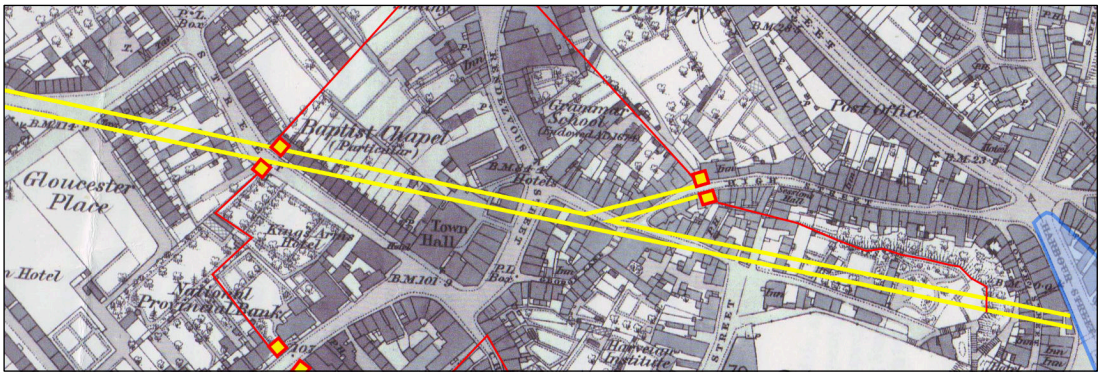
The first of these, the financial institution is derived from the money lender's table which is called a "banca", the Italian word for table or shelf, which is the tie in with other meaning i.e. a long, high mass or mound of a particular substance.

But the one which interests us is the French word "banque" (derived from the Italian). In the same way that World War 1 troops turned "Ypres" into "Wipers", did Folkestone residents turn the "que" sound into a "ker" spelling? Did, what the Norman Lord of the manor called the "banque" gate, i.e. the gate on the bank, end up being called the "banker" gate by the local residents?

As always with such things, the term "Bankersgate" could refer to an area or that the

road led to the gate itself. Either or both could be correct in this case. Thus far, it is only the Blue route into town that isn't guarded by a gate of some kind so it is reasonable to assume that a) this gate is either in or at the end of the road called "Bankersgate", b) that the gate is on the blue route and c) it sits at the end of the Bankers Wall. It must also contribute to the enclosure of the town in some way

The map below shows the Yellow Route into town coming in from the left, through the Shorelands Gate and heading towards the site where the Pharos would have stood (now washed away). It also shows the turn-off, down the Old High Street, towards



A modern map with the ancient Roman roads through town superimposed

Map and route of the old roads from the joint author's book "Tracks" published in 2019

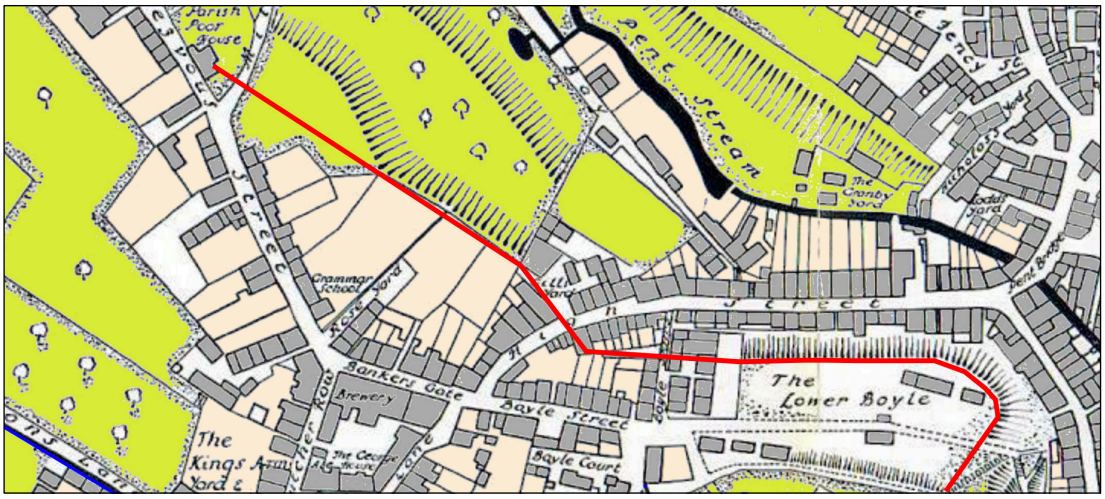
Dover, herein called the Blue Route. The position shown for Bankers Gate is the only one that matches the criteria in the previous paragraph.

Wall 5 - Bayle Wall

This is the most difficult to place because it is just possible that there was no actual wall in the first place. When looking for the castle walls it is all too easy to be distracted by the shape and outline of the 18th century fortifications drawn on most of the later maps. Even the 1698 estate map has a triangular area where we assume the castle to have been.

But, if you were a Norman noble seeking to build a castle on a hilltop, why would you build a defensive wall some 20-30 metres away from a natural ridge line that would add to your defence level? Why would you allow any enemy the opportunity to climb an undefended slope and give him that much level ground from which to assault your walls? It is much more likely that, if you were going to build a wall, it would be along that ridge line as the diagram below, based on the 1782 survey, shows.

The earlier method of showing hills by hatching actually simplifies the diagram and



The town walls from Copthill Gate to the coast superimposed onto the 1782 map of the area

The Bayle wall to the rear of 18 The Old High Street

The Bayle wall to the rear of 26 The Old High Street

The upper portion of the Bayle Wall drawn onto the 1782 survey map

allows us to demonstrate how the town walls would have followed the natural lie of the land.

There was, possibly, no real reason to build a wall around the area called the Lower Bayle since the steepness of the hill would provide a natural barrier. If a wall were built, it would probably be more for enclosure and to dominate the landscape.

The rising high street would gradually reduce the protection offered by the ridge as the road and the ridge converge to be the same level at the top of the high street. (Just compare the heights of the Bayle Wall in the pictures on the following pages.)

So, at some point along the red line you would have to start building a wall to maintain that protection and link up with the Bankers Gate. For the sake of simplicity, we can assume that this wall would be on the red line in the built-up section of the diagram above.

The search for evidence to support that contention was made considerably easier by a resident in Bayle Street who kindly allowed the authors access to his property and

The concrete structure enclosing what may be the remains of the Bankers Gate

Demolition work in progress on No. 12 The Old High Street prior to redevelopment

another fenced-off section in the Old High Street. The latter contained a structure that was encased in concrete during or just after the Second World War. From its position (the pink square that the red line passes through after turning North in the diagram) it is possible that this may be the remnants of the Bankers Gate, but we are unlikely to be able to say for certain without removing a considerable amount of concrete. This is shown as the little pink square, outlined in red, on the diagram above.

The larger, yellow, building at the end of the wall is what is now numbers 10 & 12 in the high street were redeveloped a few years ago and one of the co-authors, Eamonn Rooney, managed to get some pictures of what lay there previously, which are reproduced here.

The wall facing the viewer, between the wall on the left and the high street,is clearly of a different construction.

The straight edge of this wall suggests that it was built at a different time and built against the Bayle Wall since it is not keyed into it in any way. The purpose of this wall was probably to divide one large building into two.

The hole in the Bayle wall on the left extends into “next door” and loose infill suggests that it might have been a window

The inside of No. 12 the Old High Street after the cellar had been cleared of rubble.

The remains of the Bayle Wall at the top of the stairs have been removed as well.

Note the thinness of the roof in the back corner and the reduced height of the alcove, both of which support the contention that this is just a covered-over alley

If anything, they add to the confusion and are difficult to interpret but it is clear that the Bayle Wall passes through the concrete structure and is integrated into the rear wall of Nos.10 & 12 suggesting that the concrete structure was built sometime after the wall. Modern survey maps show a small offset section at the rear of the building, which is also shown above. The picture on page 35 shows a large goods yard on the corner and there is some indication in the pictures that this was originally an access alley to the rear of number 12.

The picture above shows number 12 during the demolition phase of a redevelopment.

The inside of No. 12 the Old High Street with the floor level shown in white and the approximate site of the Bayle Wall shown in yellow.

The inside of No. 10 the Old High Street with a doorway cut into the old wall.

Factors confirming that it was a wall and not a building:

- The top of the wall is level with the ground behind it
- The roof of the alley is above the wall line
- The lintel supporting that roof has been cut down into the wall

An enlargement of the door lintel from the picture above

The scaffolding stands just to the right of the concrete structure and the garden shed in the background at the top of the photo is behind 82 Bayle Street.

The broken, half wall in the middle ground is in alignment with the wall shown on the previous page and would have gone across the building to meet the turn by the leg of the scaffolding. The thickness of this wall can seen, end-on below. The clean-cut, neatly-aligned stones on the end of this wall, together with a set of steps under the sheet of wood would suggest that this was a doorway constructed at the same time as the rest of the building.

The picture at the bottom of page 36 shows a newer wall meeting the Bayle Wall, which divided a larger building into two buildings (the modern 10 & 12). The picture above shows the scene in that part of the building with another part of the Bayle Wall across the middle ground of the picture. Here, too, there is an opening, but this opening has been cut into the wall and the edges dressed rather that being built as the wall was. The lintel to this opening is made from a section of railway track laid on its side. The lintel across the alley in the picture above may also be railway track, but it is not so easy to enlarge the image to confirm this.

Railway track seems to have been used as a form of poor man's "I" beam in those day since there are a number of instances of it being used in this area, at the bottom of the Old High Street and even during the construction of the upper tunnel of the Leas Lift. For example, when the alley into the area from Bayle Street (yellow arrow above) was

built over, it too was framed with railway track. Since the railway didn't come to Folkestone until 1843, it dates this opening and the roofing of the alley to sometime in the latter half of the 19th century.

This wall is still part of number 10 and can be seen at the back of the current shop.

The wall coming towards us on the left of the picture opposite appears to have been built at the same time to create the small room, which was used as a toilet. However, the door and steps in number 12 were built at the same time as the wall and are, therefore, more likely to have been the gatehouse than the concrete structure.

Gate 5 - The Nether Gate

In the picture thus far painted, there appears to be no place for this gate in the enclosure of the town, so where could it have been? It was obviously mentioned in those town records that Mackie examined but are no longer available and he describes it thus:

> *"...and near the Town Hall there appear to have been two others, called the West Gate and the Nether Gate. This latter was probably between the east side of the present King's Arms Inn, and the opposite side of Guildhall Street, where a few years since were the remains of a stone wall of considerable thickness"*

The West Gate is clearly the one on the Sandgate Road but there is nowhere else near the town hall that would suggest the site for a gate.

The word "nether" means lesser or smaller; could this be lesser in the sense of not so important; or smaller in the literal sense. Either way, there appears to be no logical place for it unless it is either the missing "formal" gate to the priory as described in that section later on (now situated under the Wilko warehouse) or the gate in what is now Church Street, built much later on, when the prior wall was breached to allow the townsfolk access to what is now the parish church (during the Reformation?).

Wall 1 - the Priory Wall

Called the Priory Wall because it was a wall that bounded both the priory and the town. It has a more complex story that is worthy of a section of its own and this will be found later on.

Land to the rear of 11 West Cliff Gardens

The steps up into West Cliff Gardens show how much the ground was raised to provide level ground on which to build the houses.

It also shows the true height of the priory wall in the far corner

The far corner in the picture above showing that the two walls are keyed into one another and are likely to be part of the same structure.

As that sections shows, part of the priory wall still exists, running South from Church Street to a junction with the churchyard wall. The part of the wall from this junction to Sandgate Road has, until now, been thought to have long-since been lost under the redevelopments of that area that have taken place over the years. However, a section of it has recently found to the rear of No. 11 West Cliff Gardens, as shown at the bottom of the previous page.

Although this appears to be a fairly low wall, it should be borne in mind that the ground level here was raised and levelled when the whole of West Cliff Gardens was built in the late 19th century. This is why there is a wall and steps down into the churchyard at the end of the road. The true height of the wall can be seen in the picture opposite.

From the picture below it is clear the two wall were built at the same time with one keyed into the other and that the one across the picture is perpendicular to the priory wall. As the corner shot opposite shows, the wall extends beyond this junction and further into the churchyard, possibly making the corner in the churchyard the side and back walls of a building.

This tantalisingly suggests that this might be the answer to the whereabouts of what Elgar call “the Guest House” in his 1921 book.

The suggestion of this as the location for the Guest House appears to contradict that suggested later in the section about the Priory Walls later on in the book, but only to the difference in accuracy between the 1625 map reproduced in Elgar’s book and the map based on Powell’s 1782 survey.

Both show the building backing onto the same wall but just in different places along it. The distance involved is the length of the dark wall facing us in the picture above.

The Edwardian Walls

Defences built during the 100-years War

These walls are also mentioned in Mackie's book:

> *"The old wall, in all probability, surrounded the town on the land side, the sea side being sufficiently protected by its tall and steep cliffs, except at the low portion about the harbour, where we know there was a part of the wall, and one of the gates called the Sea Gate."*

Where the walls built for the Norman Manor were more for enclosure, the walls built in the 14th/15th century were clearly built for defence, to meet an expected invasion by the French and were what was called a "Stop Line" in the Second World War.

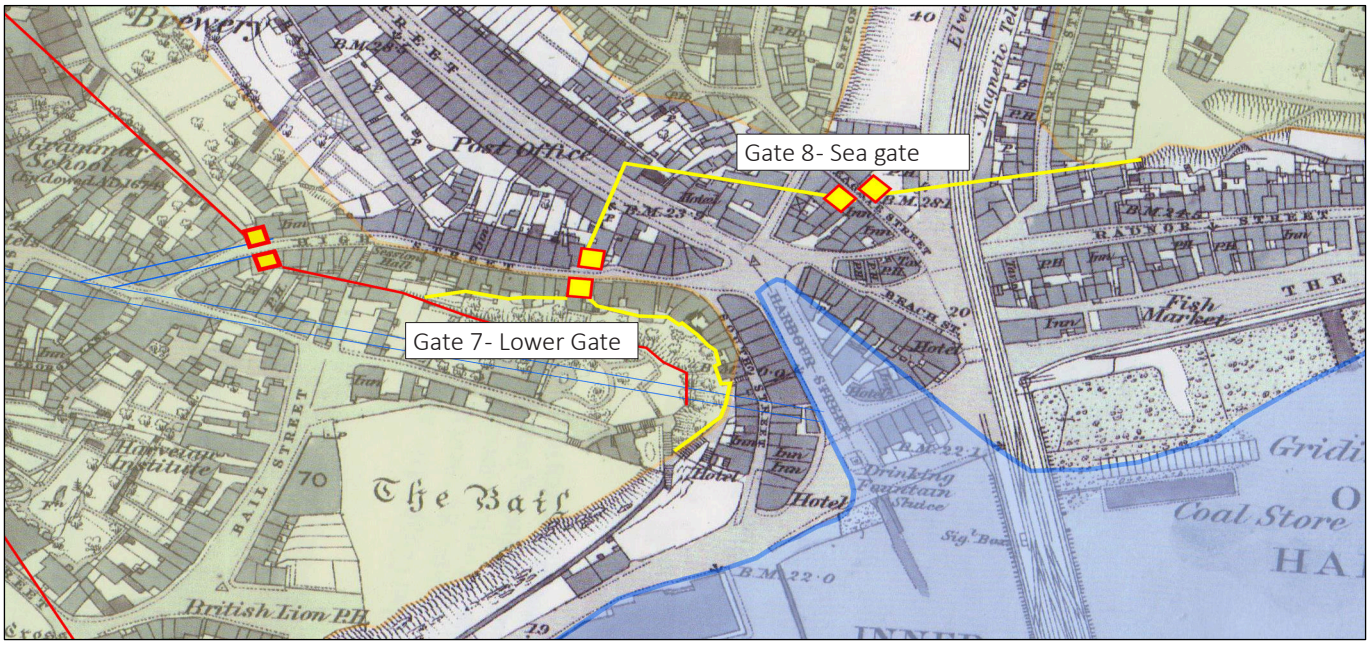
This stop line was not much more than 100 metres long and even, if troops stood shoulder to should along it, it would have been difficult to provide a defence force of more than 150 or so troops across this critical access point.

They would have stood little chance of stopping a determined invasion without the support of the artillery batteries on the Bayle and the Durlocks, so it is likely that additional troops and field artillery would have been drafted in and stationed on the high ground immediately behind the wall as well

Gate 7 - the Lower Gate

The evidence to back up the existence of this gate is pretty slim, but it would have been essential for the defence of the town but even more essential for the defence of the Bayle Battery. If you have such a battery on high ground, it would be inconceivable that you would leave an easy, undefended route up to that battery that the Old High Street would have provided.

The military aim would have been to hold back or slow down the invaders at the gate, thereby leaving them at the mercy of troops massed on the Lower Bayle. If the gate succumbed to the assault and was overrun, the invaders would have been stopped at



Map of the town showing the Edwardian defences (in yellow) integrated with the Norman castle walls (in red)

The backyard behind No. 62 The Old High Street showing the Curtain Wall on the left with another wall standing perpendicular to it (towards the high street).

This wall has an arched alcove which may have given access to battlements above the gate.

Since this wall is facing downhill, it suggests that there must have been some other wall behind the viewpointof the picture, otherwise this access would have been open to the enemy.

the next line of defence, the Norman walls and Bankers Gate. While trying to overwhelm this, the invaders would, once again, be the prey of defenders arraigned along the Bayle Wall as well as any troops on the other ridge on the other side of the valley.

Unlike Bankers Gate, the Lower Gate would have been a fortified, fighting gate or barbican.

Another slim clue is provided by the extra width of the high street, just to the right of the gate on the map opposite, which may have been a passing place for wagons going into the gate.

All signs of a gatehouse on the other side of the road disappeared when the Granby Inn was built. In digging down for the cellar, as will be seen later, they excavated down the level of the Pent Stream, which was deep enough to destroy any foundations or

The curtain walls in Balvenie Castle, Scotland, on the left and Arundel Castle, Sussex, on the right.

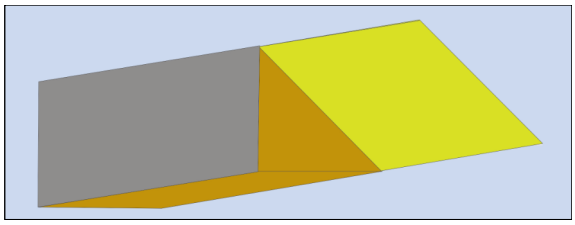
traces of the gatehouse.

Wall 6 - Curtain Wall

Much of the Curtain Wall (the yellow line to the left of the gate on the map on the previous page) has been preserved because the shops being built along the South side of the high street were built backing on to it. It might be argued that this wall was built for each shop when it was built but this is a single wall running the whole length of the street and the cost of doing it would have been so high that it had to be borne by the town corporation or the crown.

Its purpose would have been to protect the Bayle Battery, not by withstanding cannon fire because there was only earth behind it, but simply by making it more difficult to climb up to the Lower Bayle and, thereby, funnelling the attackers up the high street and leaving them at the mercy of those on the higher ground around them.

This very simple principle is explained by the diagram on the right. If you have a grass slope coming down to the track that would have preceded the high street, like the green one in the diagram, attackers could simply climb up it. If you dig the earth out and build a retaining, curtain wall (the grey bit) then you need siege ladders to get up it.



The curtain wall runs up the hill, behind the shops, from the Lower Gate to a junction with the Norman Bayle wall behind No.48. The bit behind No.62 the Old High Street is shown on the previous page.

Wall 7 - Tontine Wall

The Tontine Wall links the Lower Gate and Sea Gate and was designed to block off the Pent Stream valley. The gatehouse for the North side of the Lower Gate was lost under the development of the Marquis of Granby Inn, but the Tontine Wall were absorbed into the foundations of the westerly wall of the inn's yard as shown in the picture at the top of the next page.

The inn was quite a large establishment as the catalogue description when it was auctioned on the 14th February 1804 shows:

> *"Lot 1. All that new erected Freehold Messuage or Tenement, Garden, Stabling for four horses, together with A very Complete Tan Yard comprising 70 vats, drying house, double bark barn, large and commodious beam house, scouring house, mill house, leather house, sheds, and other suitable and convenient building thereto belonging,*

The west wall of the Grnby Inn, exposed in October 2017 during the demolition phase of the redevelopment of the area between Tontine Street and The Old High Street previously occupied by the inn's yard.

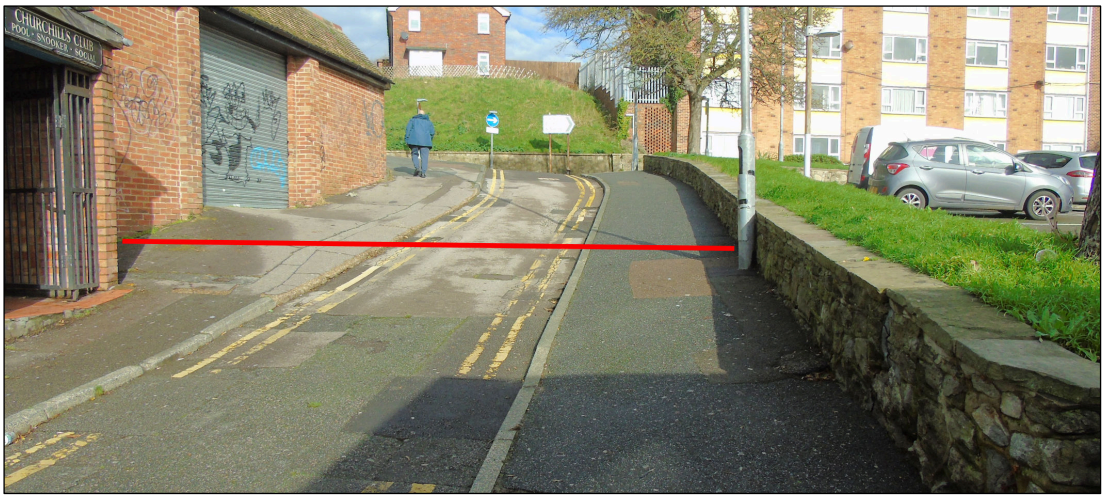
The Tontine Wall can be seen below the line of bricks on the left.

The route of the Tontine Wall overlaid onto the 1872 map.

The slope shown by the hatching is fairly steep behind the 19th century buildings that were built after the stream was confined in an underground culvert, but it gets more gentle as the slope flattens out towards the gate.

The approximate line of the Tontine Wall across Harbour Street.

Note the overall gentle slope downwards across the picture from left to right



eligibly situated in the town of Folkestone aforesaid, and now in the possession of the said Assignees.

That plot extended across to the other side of the Pent Stream, as can be seen in the map above so there must have been a usable bridge of some kind. We shall never know whether this was a purpose-built bridge or just the remnants of the wall.

On the other side of the stream, the wall extended to the base of the slope making up the northern slope of the Pent Valley and then turned to follow the foot of that slope across to the Sea Gate. The co-author Terry Begent found remains of that wall in the basement of No.14 Tontine Street when he lived there some years ago.

Gate 8 - Sea Gate

All that remained of the Sea gate for many years, apart from the now-defunct town records explored by Mackie, was the name of the street that led through it, but even this was blown away by the blast of a German land mine in 1940, which flattened the whole area between the railway and the end of Tontine Street.

Seagate Street and the wall line just visible in the top right hand corner of the post-war picture

The bottom end of Seagate Street and wall line.

The pillar shown is the garden wall of one of the many pubs in the area before the devastation of the land-mine explosion in 1940.

The line of the wall from a different angle

The group of women is standing roughly where the tourist information office used to stand in the what is now the Tram Road car park.

The line of the walls either side of the gate were preserved, until that event, in the layout of the roads, as the post-war pictures opposite show. Shortly thereafter, the whole area was redeveloped, and Seagate Street disappeared forever under the tarmac of what is now the Tram Road car park

Mackie was not alone in saying that there was a sea gate in this location. There is a number "20" marked in this area on the 1698 Folkestone Estate map and this is described in the table of contents as *"The Olde Sea Gate"*

Wall 8 - Durlocks Wall

The line of the wall from the Sea Gate to the Durlocks can only be estimated from the road layout already mentioned but the coming of the railway in 1843 and the developments of North Road would already have destroyed any last traces of this bit of wall.

Wall 9 - Harbour Wall

The Harbour Wall (shown in yellow on the map on page 41) runs down the high street from the Lower Gate and around the bottom of the slope below the Lower Bayle and, just like the Curtain Wall above, is there to stop, or at least make it difficult for attackers to climb that slope.

The wall, shown below, was exposed during the building of a restaurant at the bottom of the street in June 2010, which replaced a number of buildings put up in the late 19th century. The buildings on this site had a number of uses over the years including shops, arcades and even a nightclub.

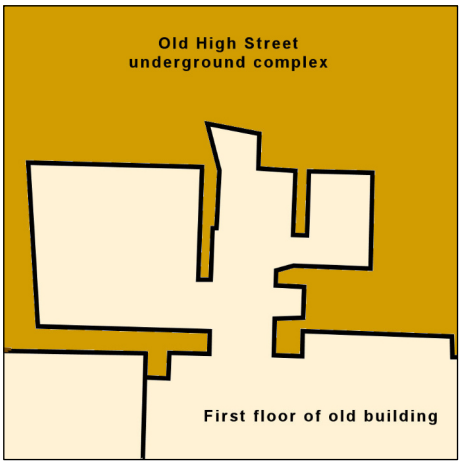
The picture below doesn't really give a good indication of the height of the wall since it is clear, in the top right hand corner, that some modifications have taken place over the years. The height of the wall can, however, be more clearly seen in the picture, at the top of the next page, beside the doorway.

The curtain wall behind 70- 72 The Old High Streeet

The opening to the underground complex behind 70-72 The Old High Street.

The height of the wall can be seen next to the doorway.

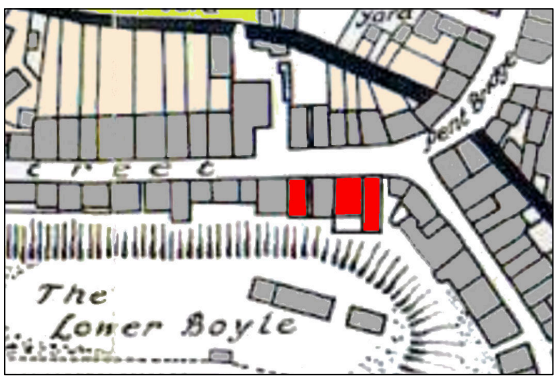
There are two other curiosities in this picture overleaf. Firstly, the railway track protruding from the left. As already mentioned earlier, railway track seems to have commonly been used instead of a structural "I" beam and in this case it has been used to construct a small, flat-roofed room next to the building that was demolished to make place for the restaurant and against the wall shown above. The picture opposite shows that this structure has been integrated into the new building.



The other, more obvious curiosity is the doorway itself, which quite clearly leads into an underground complex of some kind, including a window on the left of the picture. The planning application for the new building shows the layout of this complex to be as shown on the right. This complex has been closed off by the new building.

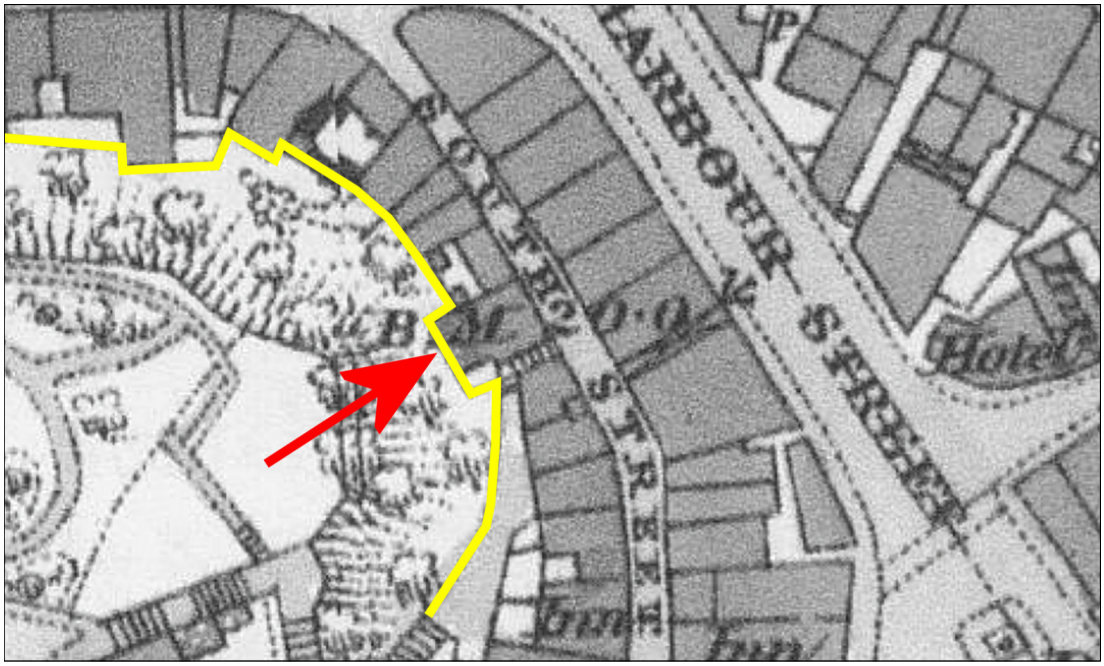
So, the question arises, "Who would be in a position to extend their property over the property boundary and under the hill owned at the time by the Lord of the Manor?"

The answer is found in Powell's 1782 survey which lists the properties shown in red below as being "Crown Land" and suggests that number 24, the smaller property on the left, is a residence for whoever worked in the larger building on the right. What was it? Military, or some kind of official. It will take a proper historical investigation of some kind to



Nos. 24 and 26 The High Street, as they were numbered in 1782 and shown in red, are listed by Powell as being "Crown Land"

The Harbour Wall highlighted on the 1872 Ordnace Survey map



The section of wall marked by the arrow above

The section of wall originally behind the buildings in South Street

find that out.

Anyway, where the wall goes next is confused a little by the row of buildings shown in South Street in the picture opposite, which have now been replaced by the flower bed shown above. Landslips further around the hill, where the steps now are, have also made it difficult to determine what happened to the wall there. The wall behind the flower bed has clearly been repaired but the lower section appears to be intact

Folkestone Priory walls

When the priory moved outside the castle walls

This wall is, perhaps, the best documented wall of all the town walls since it can be found on numerous maps and even in a couple of ancient photographs as well.

Its story starts with an area of Church Street, shown at the top of the next page, that was previously known as *"Mercery Lane"* but for many years before and since has also been known as *"The Wall"*, as the following extracts from Eamonn Rooney's legendary card index show:

> *1784 March 4th Common Assembly.*
>
> *"At this meeting the Town Water and the Town Wall was taken into consideration when it was put to the question whether the wall and gutter should be only repaired or whether it should be carried from the Cistern to the corner of the Court Hall ...."*
>
> *1804 October 24th Commissioners of Paving Minute Book, page 63.*
>
> *"Ordered. Best of old wooden pipes be taken up and laid from cistern across road by George Boxer's house and that the water be conveyed from thence above ground at top of the Wall opposite Guildhall and then conveyed across Road by iron pipes."*
>
> *1861 March 16th Folkestone Chronicle, page 8.*
>
> *"Meeting of the Corporation 11th March.*
>
> *Mr. Woodward proposed to give up a small piece of ground, at the corner opposite the Town Hall, on condition of the Corporation altering the pavement, and lowering the footway, known as 'the wall', in front of Mr. David Godden's old house, the water from the town dyke running in pipes under that part, at first seemed to present difficulties, but this was proposed to be remedied by a syphon pipe being laid down. The estimated cost was £10.*
>
> *Alderman Tite said the Corporation had lately been at considerable expense in lowering the wall, laying down pipes and paving that part of town."*

There is always a reason for people adopting these names and the reason probably dates from a time before there was a need to formally designate roads and standardise addresses. When that designation eventually took place, it was likely that they adopted the name that the locals used or the function that it performed e.g. "market place", "castle-gate", "Guildhall Street" (where the Guild Hall stood) , "Sandgate Road" (the road to Sandgate).

So, "The Wall" implies the presence of a wall of some kind. There are two candidates in this instance: the Norman Castle wall or the Priory Wall. Of the two, the Priory Wall is the most likely, so this paper sets out to explore if there is any evidence to support the contention.

The first clue, strangely enough, is the bit of wall shown below. As the arrow shows, it sits just to the right of the black wool shop in the picture above. The modern brickwork is the recently installed "Harvey Gateway". The wall behind that gateway is shown at

The area in Church Street traditionally known as "The Wall"

the top of the next page and it runs the length of the alley that will later be shown to play a part in the story.

The secret garden

The blue florist shop in the middle of the picture above has a gateway between it and the wool shop that leads to its "secret garden", shown below looking towards the back of the florist, with the walls pictured here on the left of the picture.

The wall at the top of the next page has been absorbed into the rear wall of the building known as the "old cottage" but extends from the rear of it for 8 metres (24 feet)- nearly half the length of the garden. The total length of the run, from the wool shop to the back of this alley is 30 metres (91 feet) at a height of 1.8 metres (6 feet).

There is an interesting paragraph on the florist's website about that garden that says,

> *"8-10 Church Street in Folkestone has been a florist shop for over 100 years. The shop itself is an interesting example of Victorian shop architecture and is set in the heart of the oldest part of Folkestone near the*

The last remnants of the priory wall visible outside the Harvey Gate in Church Street

The wall behind the Harvey gateway

13th century church of Saint Mary and St Eanswthye. Local legend has it the old garden at the rear of the shop formed part of the convent grounds founded by St Eanswythe in the ninth century"

This is not widely known, so it is likely that this information, although historically inaccurate, was passed down through a succession of owners of the shop rather than being common knowledge.

The middle picture opposite shows the wall that emerges from the back of the building known as the "old cottage" and how it has also been absorbed (top left corner of the picture) into the wall of the building now known as 4A & 4B Church Street.

The lower picture opposite shows where the old wall has been replaced by the modern development which created what is now the back wall of the warehouse behind the Wilko supermarket.

Another anomaly, concerns an apparent change of direction in the wall as shown in the left hand picture at the top of the page 54, which would mean that this could not be the wall that extends all the way down to the other wall in the churchyard. In fact, this small return is built against the wall of the secret garden and not keyed into it as you would expect if it was a corner in the original wall.

This return is actually part of the end wall of the building shown in the enlargement of the adjacent map. This building was removed when the electrical substation was built.

Whilst the original wall may have been lost, the modern wall does still maintain its alignment with the boundary of the "new" priory built circa 1138. This side of the wall was inside the priory grounds and the other side of the wall was outside, as will become clearer later on.

The elevated shot overleaf gives a better overall impression. The priory wall and the "Wilko" wall would have met at ground level behind the white building in the top right-hand corner. None of the obscured buildings would have existed when the priory was built.

This section of wall was just one part of the boundary of the priory. To determine the rest of it requires inspection of ancient and modern maps of the area and what is recorded of the history of the priory itself.

The secret garden looking East

The back wall of 4A and 4B Church Street

The Wilko wall

A modern day arial view showing how the priory walls all fit together.

The "new" priory

The background to the history of "The Wall" is contained within the history of the priory itself, which tells us that::

After the Norman invasion of 1066, William de Averanches is said to have erected a castle on the foundations of Eadbald's ruined castle in 1068 and the walls of this enclosed the ruins of the old church and priory.

Some 20 years later in 1086, the manor (and the castle) passed to Nigel de Muneville and his wife Emma, who *"for the welfare of their own souls, and of the souls of the wife's parents, William de Archis (or Arques) and Beatrix his wife"* , gave *"the Church of St. Mary and St. Eanswith of Folkestone, which stood within the Castle precincts"* to Ranulph, the Abbott of the Abbey of St. Mary at Louley.

They also restored the church in 1093 on its previous site or another one close by- either way, still within the walls of the castle. Once again, no mention of what happened to the saint's relics. They were either recovered from the ruins of the old church or restored from their place of safety but there is no record of the kind of ceremonial procession or service that might have been expected for such a grand occasion.

Nigel de Munville only had one child, Maud, and she inherited the manor when he died in 1103. She had married Ruallon d'Avranches, the Sheriff of Kent and their son William d'Averanche, born 1120 in Folkestone, inherited the manor from her when she died in 1134.

William, therefore, having spent a good proportion of his life in the town must have been well versed in the situation surrounding the church and priory. In 1138, he

The apparent change in direction of the wall as mentioned on page 51 and the extraction from the 1782 map that explains it.

offered the monks a new church and priory, saying that:

> *"of their own free will, the monks of Folkestone desired to remove from the place within the Castle where they had been founded, to a certain new Church which he had given them,"*

History tells us that this church was, or became, what is now the parish church of St Mary and St Eanswythe.

Missing from this tale in all of the books from the classic historians is the extent of the priory that was removed to the new site outside. If it were, as reputed, a Benedictine monastery then it is likely that the priory included a small-holding (probably The Bayle Meadow shown on the 1698 map) that provided food for the monks, although there was some talk of this being further down the road in Guildhall Street.

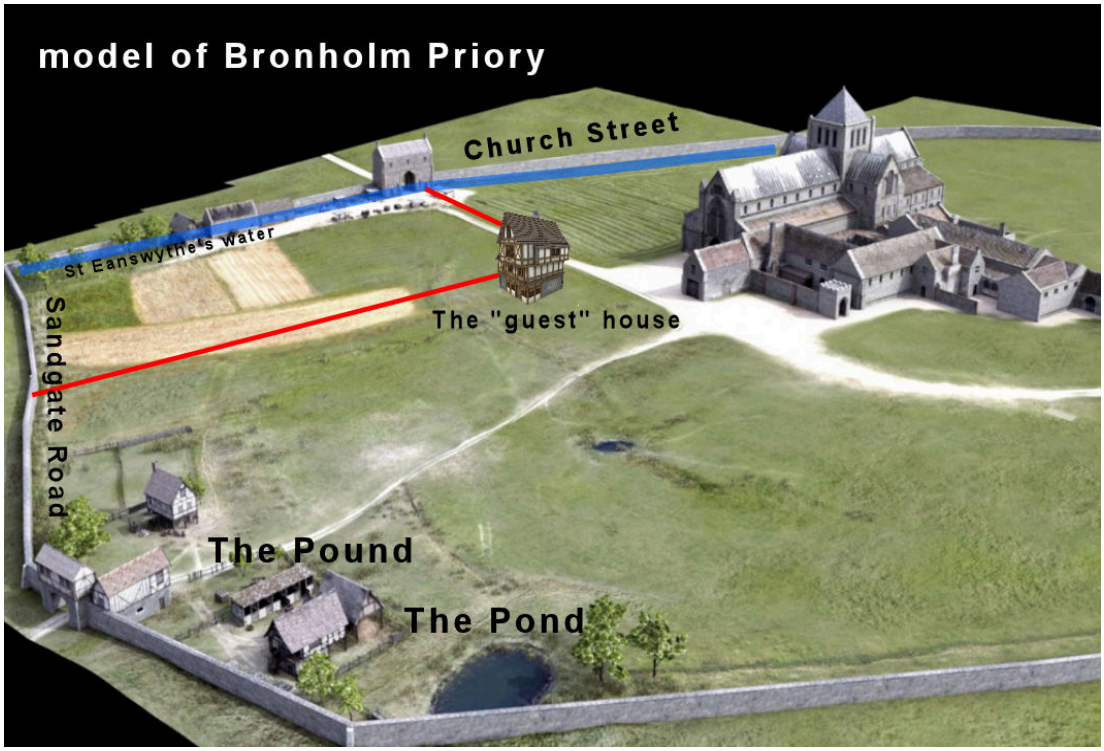
It is not too difficult to imagine why de Munville would want all of this removed from his castle grounds and it is not too difficult to believe that the monks would have expected something of a similar sized plot of land outside in return for leaving. Could this be the area shown on the 1698 map as "Z The Pigeon house Pryors Lees". Or should that be Prior's Leas? If it contained the ruins of the Prior's pigeon house (39 on the map), it is likely that the land that it stood on belonged to the priory as well.

A project to produce a 3D virtual model of Benedictine Bronholm Priory situated in a coastal location near the village of Bacton, Norfolk, gives an impression of how our local priory might have looked. The picture at the top of the page opposite is remarkably easy to modify to our own situation since the Bronholm priory has many similar elements to those shown on the early estate maps of Folkestone, laid out in an almost identical way.

The animal pound with a pond alongside is clearly visible on the 1698 estate map and its location on modern maps is easy to determine, so it provides a useful tool in drawing out the boundaries of the "new" priory of 1138. The modern road called "Pound Way" probably owes its origins to the track to the pound, possibly from the so-called guest house.

One clear difference is shown by the red line which shows how the Folkestone Priory has a "bite" taken out of the corner. The other key difference is the building that has been added, about which William Henry Elgar, in his 1921 book – "The Ancient Buildings of Folkestone District" says:

> *"There is a map in the possession of the Earl of Radnor, dated 1625, which*



shows all the lands belonging to the Priory, and gives a good drawing of the Priory House, the pigeon house, the church, and the building that we have called the guest house….."

The red line running behind this building in the picture above represents the boundary wall described in the previous section.

History tells us that the monks that were asked to leave the castle grounds were from a Benedictine order, a silent, secluded and contemplative order.

Their church would have been a monastic church to which the laity would not have been admitted until much later. The lay congregation would have worshipped in a "chapel of ease" somewhere outside the walls of the priory.

This poses a crucial question, if true, since the church would not have been what we now call a parish church.

- If it was not a parish church, the lay congregation would not worship there.
- If they didn't worship there, they wouldn't have needed access to it.
- If they didn't have access to it, there would be no need for a gate or a breach in the priory wall where Church Street now runs.
- If there was no break in the wall at this point, there would have been no road running through it.

The evolution of Church Street, or its predecessors, can only start when that breach occurs, an event that probably took place as the church was opened up to the laity.

When that happened is a question that will have to be answered by others- this paper is only concerned with the wall itself.

The Sandgate Road section of the wall

Surprisingly, part of the wall making up the corner of the priory wall as it turns towards the guest house was still in place well into the 19th century as the series of pictures on the following pages demonstrates. The first, top opposite, and the second, bottom opposite, two are Victorian before and after shots of the same scene from the same spot.

A local photographer, William Venables, had his studio and shop in the lighter building with the dormer window nearest the town hall but there is no indication of whether the "before and after" was meant to show the changes to the town hall or J H Brookes, wine merchant. This building is now the site of a travel agent- now closed for business.,

The 1872 Ordnance Survey map, below left, which shows the wall indicated by the arrow and the wine merchant's in orange (the modern day travel agent) but, as the 1900 Ordnance Survey map, below right, shows, this last remnant of this part of the wall had disappeared completely by that time. Clearly, the wine merchant was built across the corner of the early priory wall (shown in red).

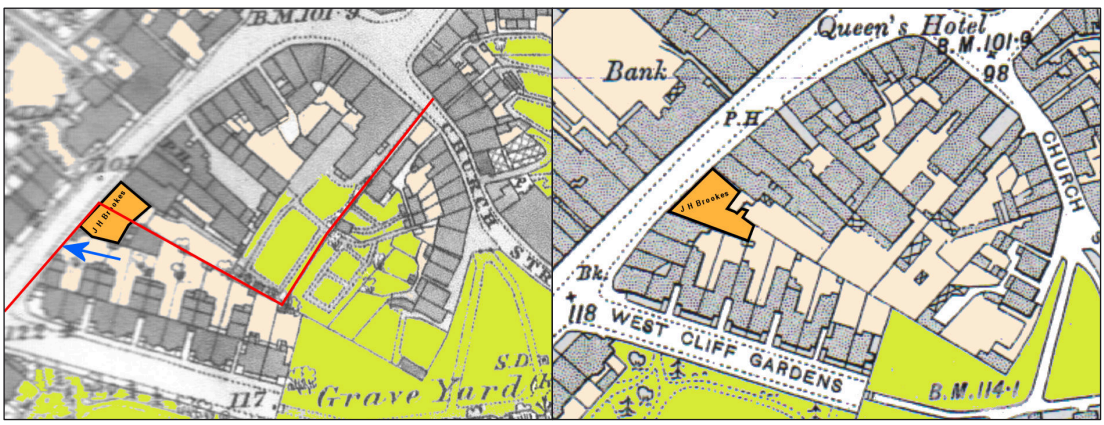
The earliest picture, shown on the right, has a peculiar indent built into the front wall between the upstairs window, which precisely lines up with this early priory wall. Curiously enough, this indent was also included in the new building shown in the next picture in the series and is still visible today on the travel agency.

In neither case does it have any function. Was this a covenant to show the old boundary or was it, perhaps, because that part of both the old and the new buildings were built on priory land in the early days or at least land under a different ownership?

The bottom picture opposite, was taken just three years later and shows the new town hall and the wine merchant's new building also with the curious indent indicated. There is also a better photographic contrast to the wall itself, which appears to show that it has been raised at some point. The lower segment (level with the man's head) is the same height as the secret garden wall shown earlier.

The third picture, top of page 58, shows the same scene taken further back along Sandgate Road and shows the priory wall now sitting between the wine merchant and the new houses built mid 19th century when Westcliff Gardens was created. The Queen's Hotel, to the left of the picture, was built in 1887 so the picture dates between then and 1900 when the last remnant of the wall had disappeared as the Ordnance Survey map opposite shows.

The lower picture on page 58 shows where the wall would fit in the modern street scene. That curious indent is still there between the first floor windows of the white building to the left of the superimposed wall, although the ground floor and the



The 1872 Ordnance Survey map on the left and the 1900 edition on the right showing when the priory wall in the picture above was removed

The priory wall and Cistern House in 1858

The last bit of priory wall superimposed on the modern street scene

second floor have been extensively modified over the years.

The Western boundary

The 1625 map in Elgar's book shows that the wall in Sandgate Road actually extended right up to "The Pound" (animal pound) and the pond alongside it. It also shows that the Pryor Leez (sic) extend up to and beyond this point.

There is a lot more to unravel in the area covered by the two maps on page 56 but it would probably be better to explore the rest of the site before coming back to delve further into the implications for Church Street.

The 1698 estate map covers a much wider area than any of the previous ones and in greater detail as well. The section of it reproduced, top opposite, includes all of the areas making up the priory and is centred on the building labelled as "the pound".

The actual location of this building is easy to determine on modern maps and so it will serve well as a reference point to tie the ancient and modern maps together.

"The pound" on the 1698 map sits alongside a change of direction in the Sandgate Road that is still identifiable today. That change of direction occurs at the end of the pedestrian section outside Debenhams.

A red circle, centred on the "pound" on the 1698 map to establish relative distances

The boundary line going from the pound to the clifftop has now become West Terrace, which means that the pound sat in the middle of the modern road, between Barclays Bank and the Rainbow Centre.

The land boundaries shown around the church and other areas are the ones that existed in 1698 and may not necessarily match the earlier ones of the priory itself.

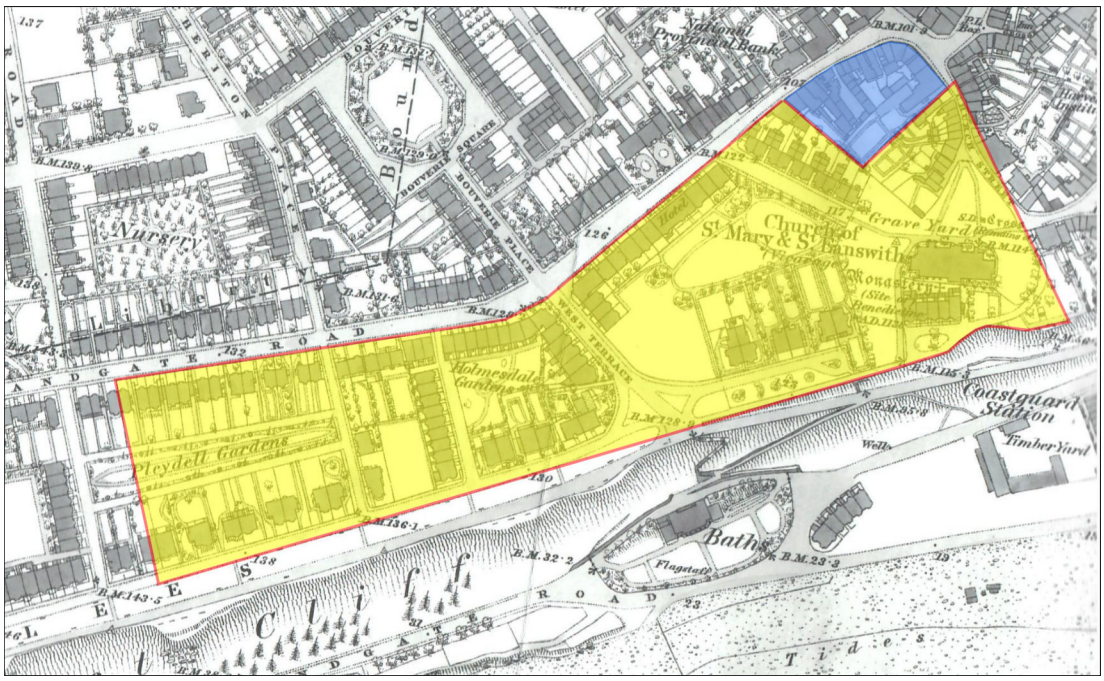
The red circle is centred on the pound and it shows that the distance between the pound and J H Brookes, the wine merchant, is roughly the same as that between the pound and the western boundary with John Mitchell's land. This makes it reasonably easy to translate this onto a modern map and/or pace it out in real life.

Drawing it on the map puts this boundary somewhere in Pleydell Gardens and a quick inspection of that site uncovered a single section of ancient wall roughly where it was expected. This is shown below but it is almost impossible to say now whether it belonged to the Priory or John Mitchell.

Superimposing that boundary onto a modern map indicates that the extent of the priory lands was considerably larger than first thought, as the second map below shows. This may be the reason why:

Wall 10- The Pleydell Gardens wall

The priory boundaries superimposed onto a modern map



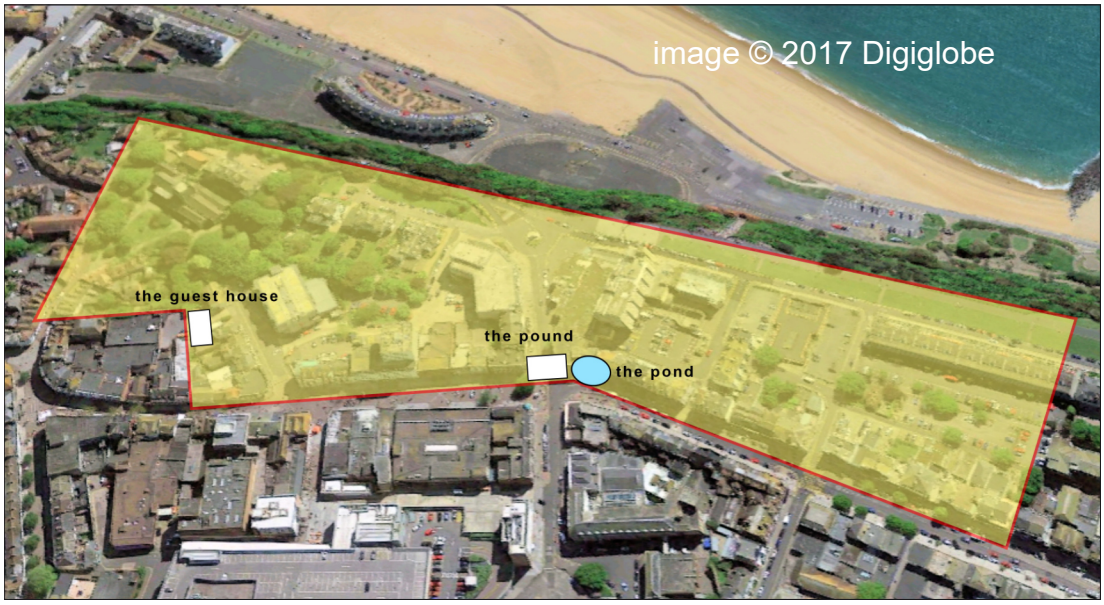
"of their own free will, the monks of Folkestone desired to remove from the place within the Castle where they had been founded, to a certain new Church which he had given them,"

William d'Averanche got his castle back and the monks were more than happy to move out because the new priory was considerably bigger than the old one and had a running water supply!

One unsolved mystery concerns the land shown in blue below. The priory wall was built around it, so it must have already had another function and belonged to someone else in 1138. As already speculated, this may lie behind the curious indent on the front of the wine merchant's building.

Another mystery is the pond- its location next to the animal pound suggesting its purpose was a regular supply of fresh duck meat for the monks. It sits in the middle of a flat plateau on top of a cliff. Was it man-made or natural and where did its water come from? St Eanswythe's Water was the only water source in the area and that was downhill from the location of the pond.

The relative positions of the elements shown on Elgar's diagram that are missing today are shown on the satellite image below.



The priory boundaries and relative positions of the elements shown on Elgar's diagram that are missing today

The Eastern boundary

Another thorny issue is that of the Eastern boundary of the priory.

The area now known as “The Bayle” is encompassed on three sides by steep hills/cliffs and on the fourth side by the current churchyard, so it is reasonable to speculate that, if the new priory was built outside the castle wall, then that castle wall ran somewhere between “The Bayle” and the priory, i.e. following the line of the modern-day Church Street. There are two possible scenarios:

1. That the castle wall and priory wall were two separate walls.

   The layout of the castle has been the subject of much conjecture and investigation with nothing definite decided. Building the two walls close to each other would have been expensive and pointless; building them more than 1.8 metres (6 feet) apart would almost certainly result in a path evolving between them- negating the need for the future creation of Church Street.

   The lack of any indication of such a track on ancient or modern maps makes this an unlikely solution.

2. That the eastern boundary of the priory was the castle wall with the other boundary walls abutting it.

The more likely solution but also having two options:

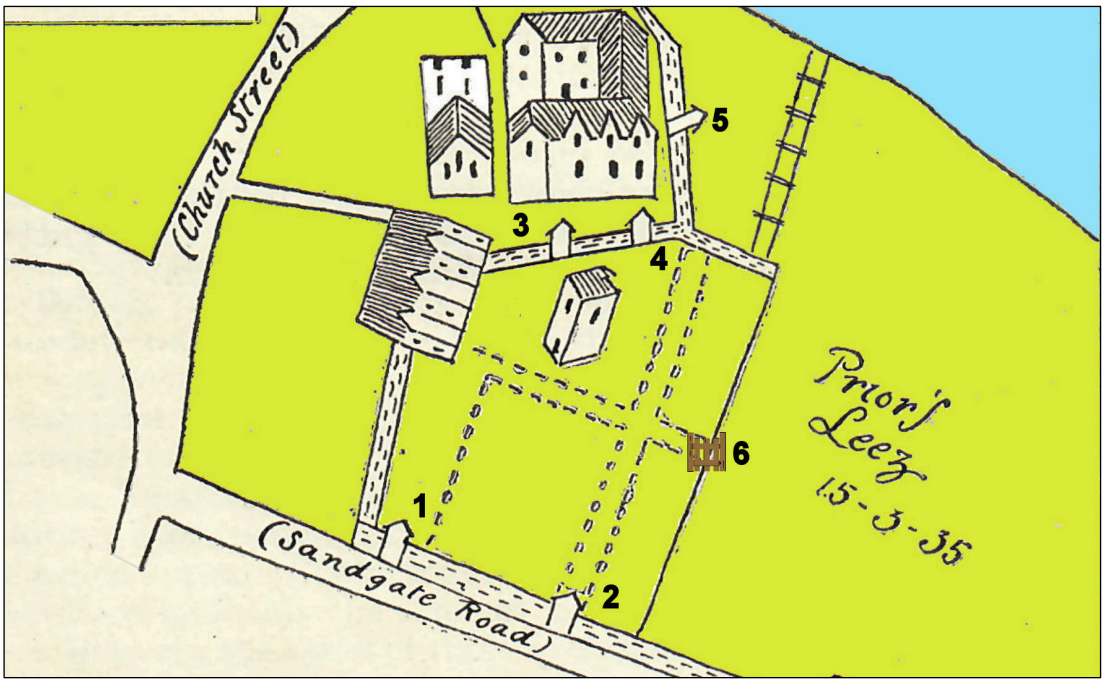
- With this wall lining up with segments of wall remaining on the Bayle and running to the East of the modern buildings in Church Street as shown in the Finding Eanswythe booklet
- With this wall running along the Eastern edge of the current Church Street i.e. to the West of the modern buildings.

Either way, this would have meant that the remnants of the wall behind the florist would have extended right across what is now Church Street, as the mock-up below shows. This is probably why the area was known locally as “The Wall”

As a side issue, whichever of the previous options applied, William d’Averanche would

A simulation of how the remnants of the wall behind the florist would have looked when they extended right across what is now Church Street

The priory gates numbered on the illustration form Elar's book



never have permitted it, if by doing so, he would have blocked off one of his castle gates, making it more unlikely that there ever was one near the site of the later priory house.

The gates

Elgar's illustration that he copied from the 1625 estate boundary map include 5 shapes (numbered above) which, from their shape and location, we can assume are supposed to be gates. As far as those gates go:

- Gate 3 has no function and goes nowhere, which might be because Elgar has mistakenly misinterpreted a tree on the 1625 estate map (page 35 of the Finding Eanswythe Project booklet, 2020) as a gate.
- Gate 2 is clearly connected to gate 4 by a path on the estate map but this is not reflected on Elgar's illustration. it's function was likely to have been to link Sandgate Road with the cloisters/residential area of the priory.
- The crossroad on the path between these gates connects with the "guest house" allowing access from that building to both the cloistered area and Sandgate Road.
- Gate 5 gives access from the cloistered area to the "Leez"
- Gate 6 leads out to the "Prior's Leez" from the crossroads on the footpath. Shown on the 1625 estate map but misinterpreted and left out by Elgar when he made his illustration.
- Gate 1 is the anomaly since neither Elgar's illustration, nor the estate map show it being at the end of a path. None of the pictures on pages 57 or 58 show it in the surviving bit of wall so it may have been in the bit of wall removed when the wine merchants was built. It didn't go anywhere or connect anything but, in modern terms, you would have had a gate where the door to the travel agent now sits and another where Lloyds Bank is. Why the priory would need two gates leading out onto the same road, in such close proximity will

The site of the priory gate shown on the 1872 Ordnance Survey map

just have to remain a mystery!!

Gates 4, 5 and 6 are all internal gates, connecting various bits of the priory's lands. Gate 1 did nothing, which apparently leaves gate 2 as the only way in or out of the priory. There are a couple of problems with this:

- There is no associated gatehouse shown on any of the maps so there would be no way of controlling who was coming in or leaving. Unless the gate was left unlocked, any traveller or trader would have no way of attracting anybody's attention to get let in because the rest of the priory was too remote.
- Whoever drew the estate map differentiated between gates 1 2,4, 5 and the design of gate 6, so that would suggest that all of these others were of a similar type- nothing special about gate 2- so they were probably similar to the ones at Clare Priory shown on the next page.

The search for a "formal" main gate takes us back to the secret garden or, more precisely, the end of the alley leading from what is now Church Street as shown on the 1872 Ordnance Survey map above.

At the bottom of the secret garden, shown in a darker green, there is a building alongside what is quite clearly a path going through the priory wall shown in red. A series of paths then radiate from this point. Is this the gatehouse that could make this the main entrance to the priory?

There is a problem, though, with the chronology of area to the left of the red line, as shown on the 1782 map shown above. This shows that there were a number of buildings in the area, one of which apparently sat right across this gateway. This is the area currently occupied by the Wilko warehouse and loading bay.

It is possible that this area was landscaped, and the gate reopened after these buildings were demolished. It is not so likely, though, that they would have thought to cut a hole in the wall to make one if it had not already been there.

Curiously enough, even today the landscape in the garden on the other side of the

An example of a typical,simple priory gate from Clare Priory in Suffolk

lower wall to the secret garden shows a wide flat space that interrupts the smooth flow of the contours next to it, as shown in the picture below.

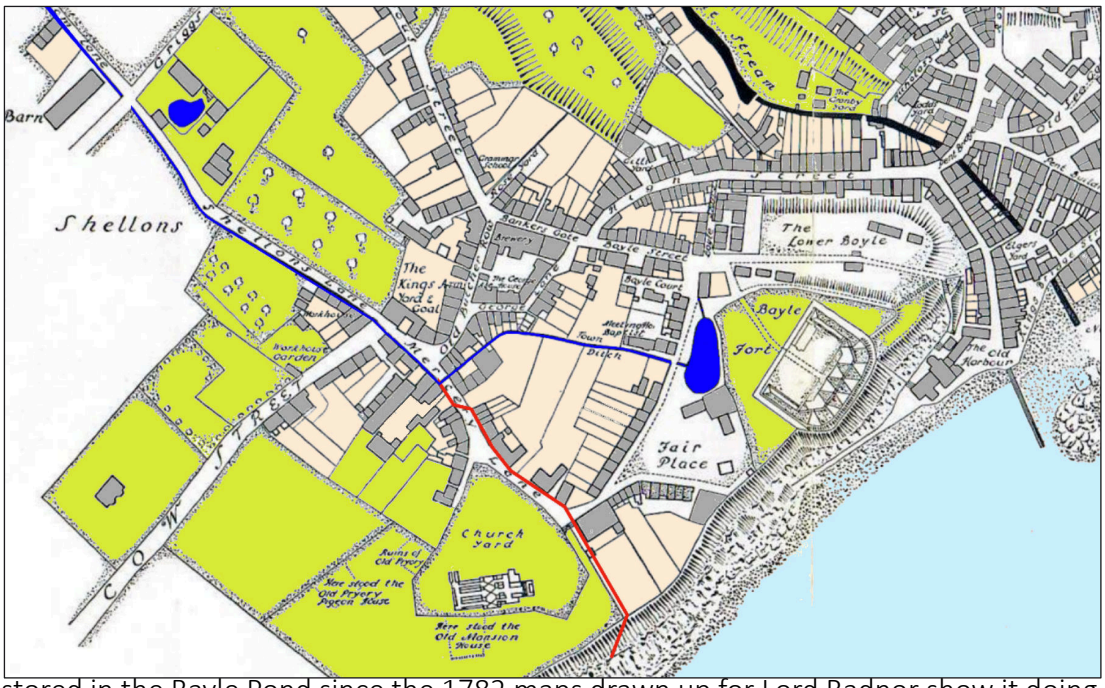
There is no way of knowing at this stage, without further investigation, when this piece of land was flattened and today it is covered over with gravel, as can be seen in the picture. It performs no function in the garden, is not a path to anywhere and is not a natural place to go to.

The biggest problem with this area, in particular, is that the various maps produced over the years, until the advent of the Ordnance Survey series of maps in 1801, contain differing and sometimes contradictory information so it is difficult to plot a natural evolution of the landscape without speculating and/or making some of the assumptions contained above.

St Eanswythe's Water

Surprisingly, St Eanswythe's Water features quite prominently in the story of the "wall". It had always been assumed that the watercourse was built to provide water to be

Possible location of the gatehouse inside the priory



The 1782 map showing the diversion of St Eanswythe's Water into the Bayle pond which was carried out in 1784

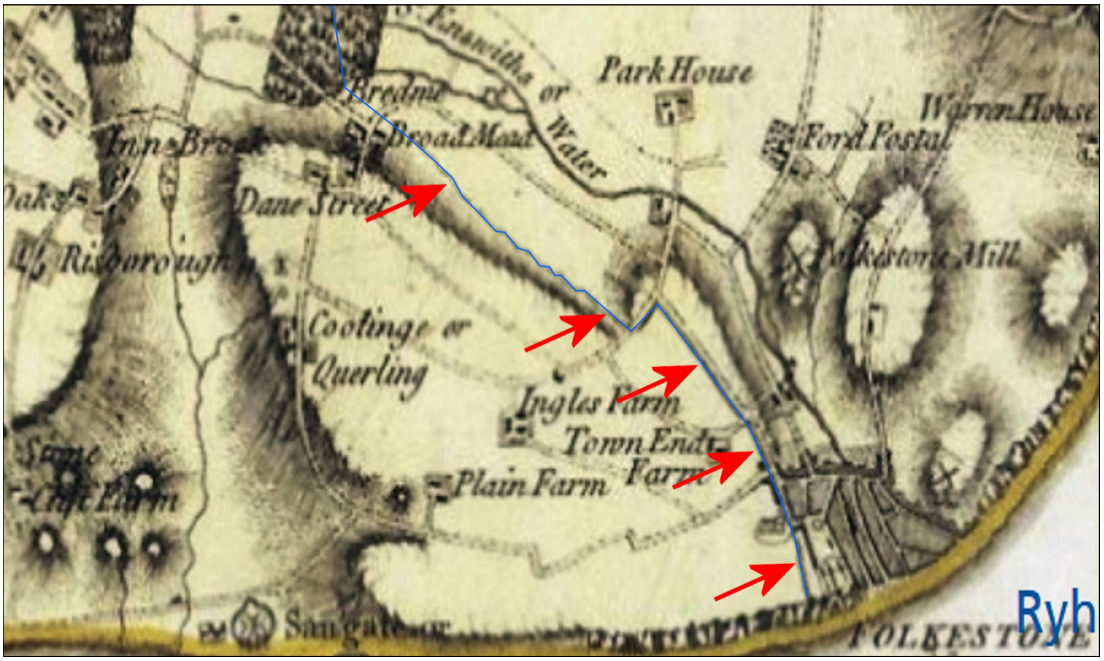
stored in the Bayle Pond since the 1782 maps drawn up for Lord Radnor show it doing just that, as shown in blue on the map above.

However, the earlier, 1698 estate map shows the watercourse flowing along what is now called Church Street and dropping over the cliff edge.

This earlier route is confirmed on the 1769 Andrews, Drury and Herbert map below and on the map on the next page from Edward Hasted's *"The History and Topographical Survey of the County of Kent (1778–99)"*. It too, shows the watercourse flowing past the church and over the cliff, although by the time that the book was published in 1797, it should have included changes to the watercourse shown on the 1782 estate map at the bottom of the next page, which suggests that the Hasted map was drawn sometime earlier.

That change of direction occurred after the town council met on the 4th March 1784 to discuss diverting the watercourse to run behind the town's guild hall:

> *"At this meeting the Town Water and the Town Wall was taken into consideration when it was put to the question whether the wall and gutter*



Andrews, Drury and Herbert 1769 map

The History and Topographical Survey of the County of Kent

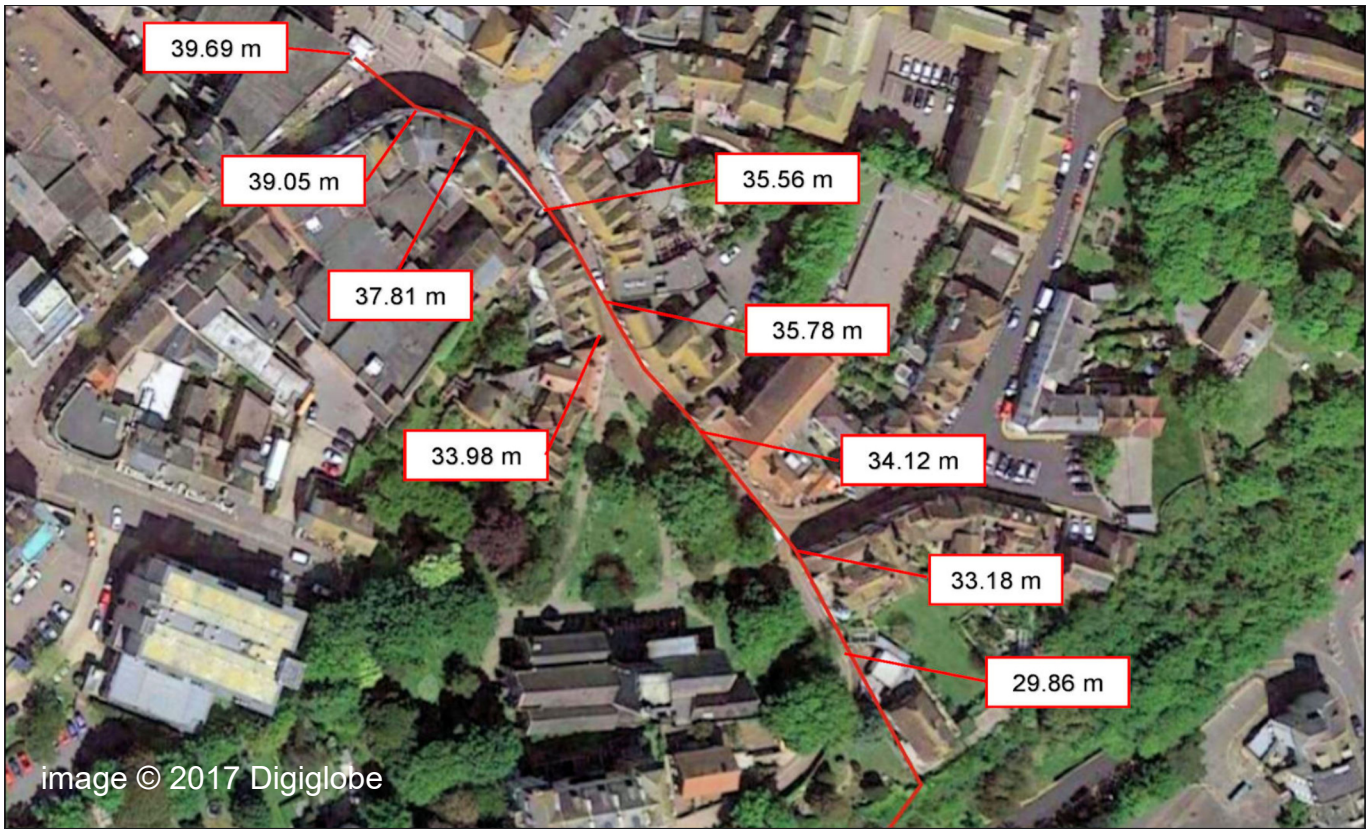
should be only repaired or whether it should be carried from the Cistern to the corner of the Court Hall ....”

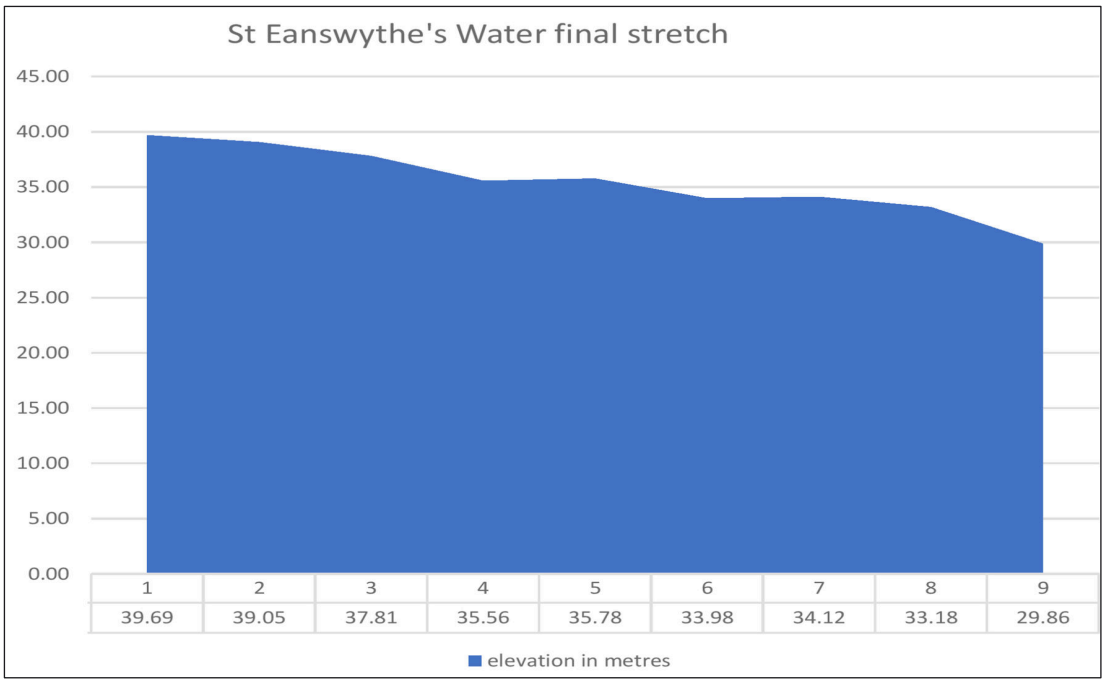
Turning the watercourse across the street would also mean that they had to provide somewhere for it to go, so this was probably the time that the link to the Bayle Pond was put in as well.

It is likely that it is this bit of the watercourse that gives rise to that part of the legend that claims that St Eanswythe made the water run uphill. Even today, people are adamant that Church Street rises as it makes its way from the town hall to the church when, in fact, it is actually dropping towards the cliff’s edge.

Spot heights along ancient watercourse

The picture below shows a number of spot heights along the original course of the stream and these are also plotted on the graph opposite to show the slope down to the clifftop.





A graph of the spot heights along the last part of the watercourse

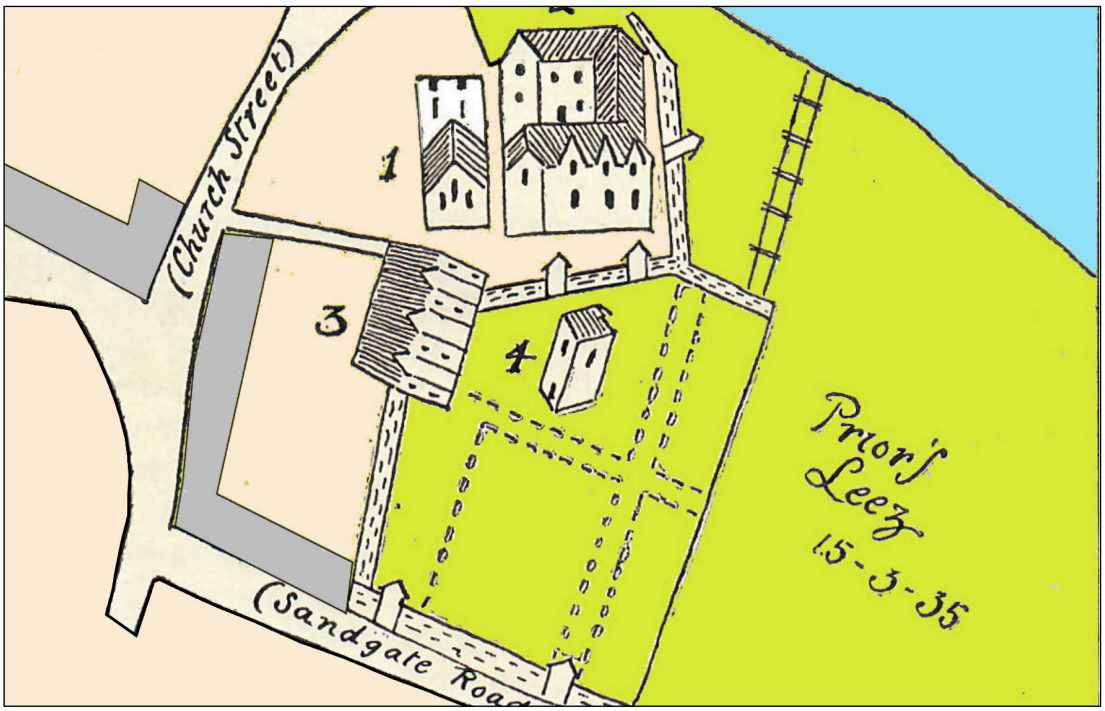
In Roman and Anglo-Saxon times, the cliff extended by about another 100 metres towards the sea. The rest has been washed away by the sea in the years since, so it is impossible to say where the stream went after it passed the point shown as being the modern cliff edge in the picture above.

So, if the wall behind the florist's shop ran right across what is now Church Street, the watercourse must have passed through the wall at some point. This would not have been an unusual thing at the time.

Many stone walls had what were called "smoots" built into the walls when they were erected. "Rabbit smoots" were the smallest and were built to allow rabbits to pass but nothing bigger; "sheep smoots" allowed sheep to pass but not cattle; and "water smoots" like the one below n Barrowdale were built to allow the passage of water.

Water Smoot through a dry stone wall in Barrowdale, Cumbria

The location of the "guesthouse" on Elgar's illustration based on the 1625 estate map



The "Guest House"

The term "guest house" derives from Elgar's book, in which he says:

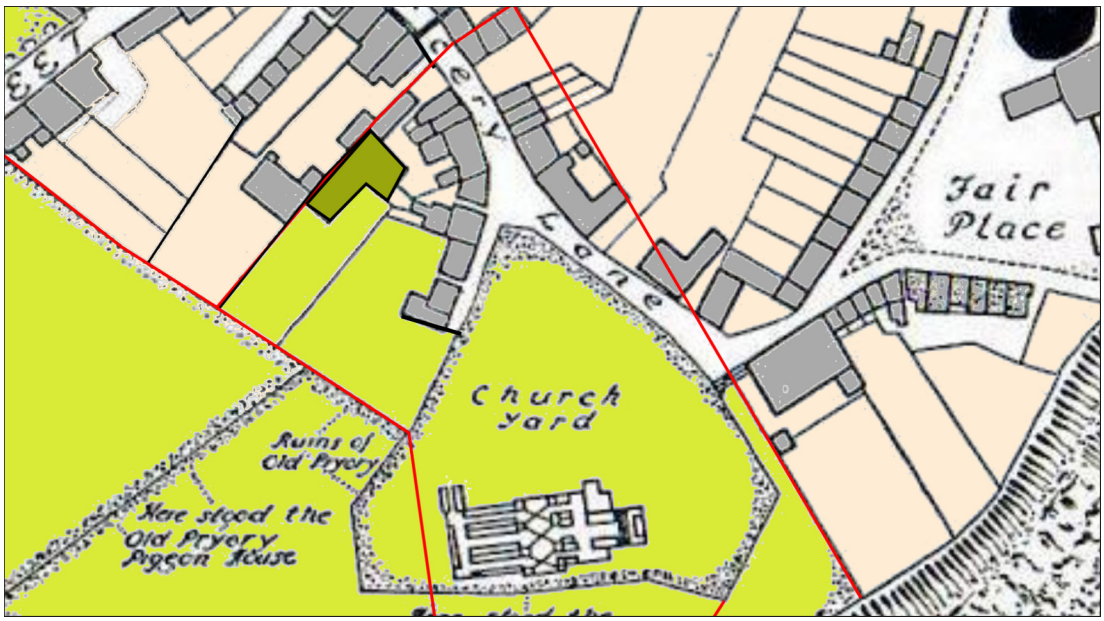
"and the building that we have called the guest house….."

That suggests that he has given the building that name and not got it from somewhere else. Indeed, none of the earlier, classic local historians make any mention of it whatsoever. In the absence of any information to the contrary, the name has stuck.

Since many priories had overnight accommodation for travellers, Elgar's assumption was probably not too far from the mark

Both Elgar's illustration (top opposite) and the estate map that he copied it from show that the "guest house" (3) is a building with a substantial frontage, apparently made up from four "units".

Each unit could be a cottage, apartment, or monastic cell- we are unlikely to ever know!



Possible site of the guesthouse shown as the ruins of an old priory on the 1782 map

The building may be included on the 1625 estate map but there is no guarantee that it was even a part of the original priory. It could have been built any time between the priory opening in 1138 and the map being drawn in 1625- once again we are unlikely to ever know.

Working on the assumption that it was part of the original priory, the only bit of the illustration that we can have any confidence in is the clear indication that the building sat at the end of the “sloping” bit of wall.

Superimposing a compilation of all the boundaries in the area from the collection of maps available on the 1782 map below, what is labelled “ruins of old priory” seems to fit the bill for the location of this building.

Various isolated walls

Sections of ancient walls having no clear purpose

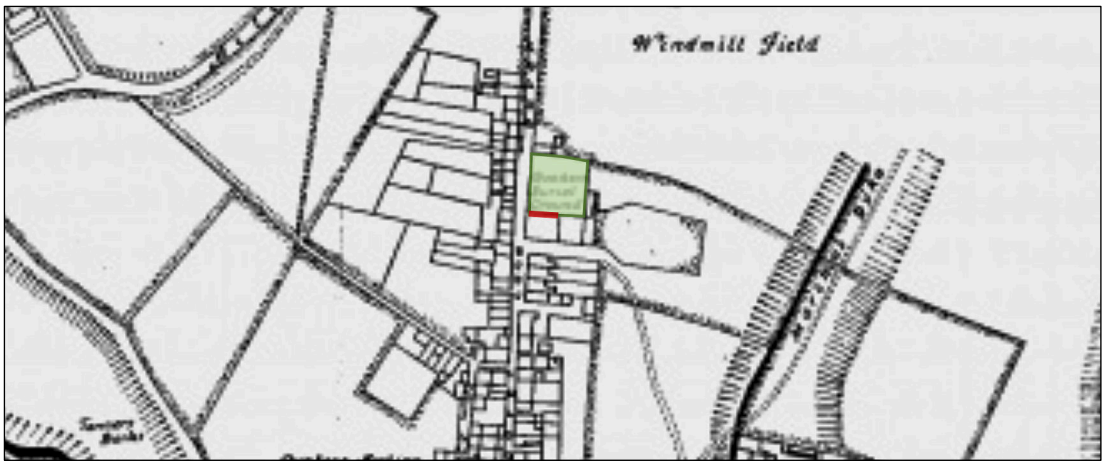
There are a number of bits of wall scattered around the town that don't appear, at first glance, to have anything to do with the town defences described above but they are mentioned here for the sake of completeness and to trigger further discussion and research as appropriate.

Wall 11 - Quaker's wall

This section of wall is still visible and is situated in the grounds of Harbour Court in Harbour Way.

Showing the location of Quakers Wall left exposed as part of the modern development of Harbour Court (on the right)

A closer view of the construction of Quakers Wall



The 1782 map showing the the Quakers burial ground in green with the location of Quakers Wall shown in red.

The Quaker's meeting house was originally situated below the picture (below the square, bottom, left of centre) but was later moved to the enclosed area to the right of the cemetery.

The wall has been called "Quakers Wall" because it is believed to be the southern wall of the Quakers cemetery that used to be in what is now Harbour Way.

Wall 12 - Quayside wall

This wall has been named for the sake of completeness but has already been investigated by archaeologists and has been included in Kent Council's list of heritage sites where it is described thus:

> *"In 1998 during a watching brief on work for the Folkestone Wastewater Scheme a wall constructed from large squared greensand blocks in clay bonding was recorded for a length of 3.5m. The wall appears to have been built on stone piles. A single sherd of pottery found suggests a construction date of c.1075 - 1150 AD. The structure appears to have gone out of use by the late 18th or early 19th century when a box drain was cut through it. This wall possibly formed part of the early medieval harbour."*

From: https://webapps.kent.gov.uk/KCC.ExploringKentsPast.Web.Sites.Public, Copyright Kent County Council. The archaeological report on the dig was not published.

The wall runs across the southern end of the Tram Road car park between the Sea Gate and the old harbour but was covered up when the work was completed and is no longer visible. Co-author Eamonn Rooney observed the work going on and says that the size and construction of this wall was pretty similar to the Quakers Wall above.

Wall 13 - Bayle Court Wall

This section of wall extends from the end of Bayle Court, just above the steps at the end of Bayle Parade. A closer inspection of the junction between the new building and

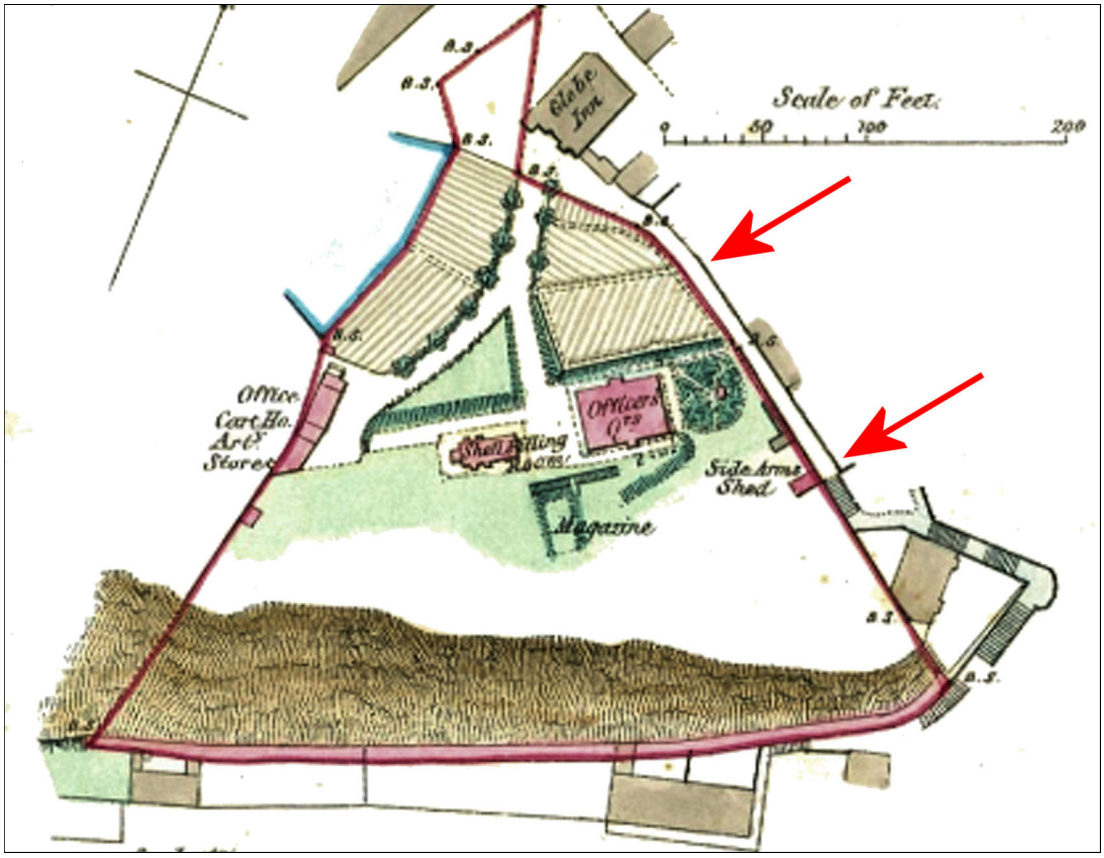
The section of wall at the end of Bayle Court on Bayle Street.

The circular bend in the Bayle Court Wall.

the old wall indicates that it was built against the old wall, raising the possibility that the old wall extends some way behind Bayle Court.

This is confirmed by the 1867 plan of the Folkestone Battery shown below, which shows the wall (arrowed) with just one small building along it. The red line represents the brick wall to the left of the stairs in the picture above that encloses the battery.

The picture above shows a curious radial bend to the old wall, which is confirmed by the brick courses above it. This could suggest a circular staircase, tower or both but any matching radius on the front wall has been masked by the brick extension above the wooden sign in the picture above.



The Folkestone Battery built to deter Napoleon and drawn in 1867

The wall has clearly been cut down to allow for the railings alongside the stairs. Cast iron railings were invented in the latter half of the 18th century and the use of hot lead to set them in the capping stones (as indicated by the red arrow on the left) suggests that the stairs and the brick wall behind them were built as part of the fortifications against a Napoleonic Invasion.

If the railings were installed before 1800, on top of the old wall, this would show that the wall was built some time before.

The plan of the battery shows a length of wall, apparently standing on its own. The 1782 map shown below confirms that there were no buildings along the wall at that time, leaving three possibilities:

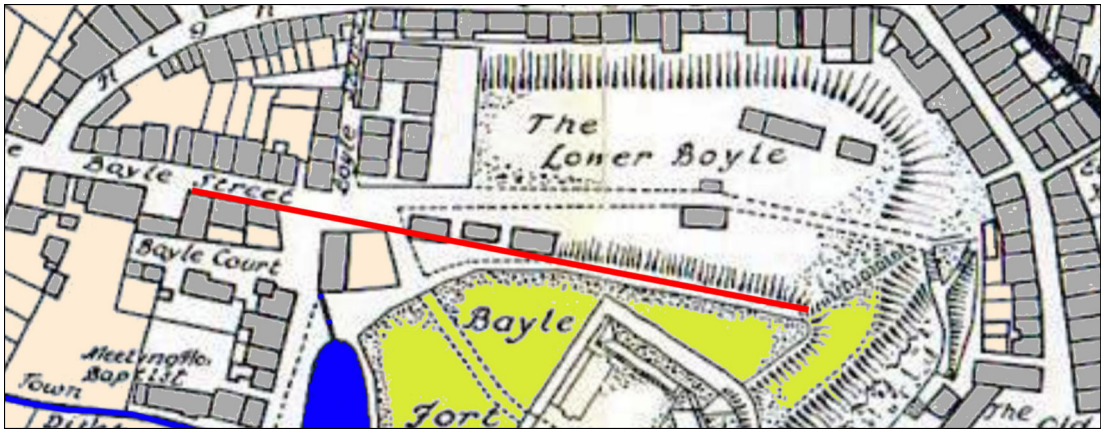
- The wall was a curtain wall for the Norman castle
- The wall was put there to protect the battery provided in the 100-Years War.
- The wall was actually part of the Bayle Fort on the 1782 map below

Projecting the line of the wall on the map below shows that a number of buildings are aligned with it- suggesting that the wall may been longer than the bit shown on the 1867 diagram of the Bayle Battery opposite. It is quite possible that the Bayle Fort show below utilised part of an existing wall.

For any of those options, the later 19th century walls would have been built alongside an existing wall and the space between them turned into a path. That original wall must have gone right to the cliff edge at the lower end and was probably partially demolished to allow the building of the stairs and/or the building shown on the battery plan.

At the top end, the wall would either have continued turning to the left, towards the Bayle Pond, like the red line on the diagram opposite does, or carried on in a straight line. A left turn would fit in more with the concept of enclosing something but there is no evidence of anything in that direction, apart from the Bayle Fort outline.

Projecting the wall in a straight line on the 1782 map below results in the red line shown. To enclose something it would have had to meet up with another wall or gate but, once again, there is no evidence of it doing so, so the mystery remains



The wall line shown on the 1782 map of the area

"The old walls of the Norman Priory on the Bayle"

From page 21 of S J Mackie's "Folkestone and its Neighbourhood" published in 1856

It may be nothing more than coincidence, but that line would lead to the walls that Mackie drew in the book that he published some 26 years earlier, In which he labelled them the *"Old walls of the Norman priory on the Bayle"*.

Talking about the Priory he goes on to say,

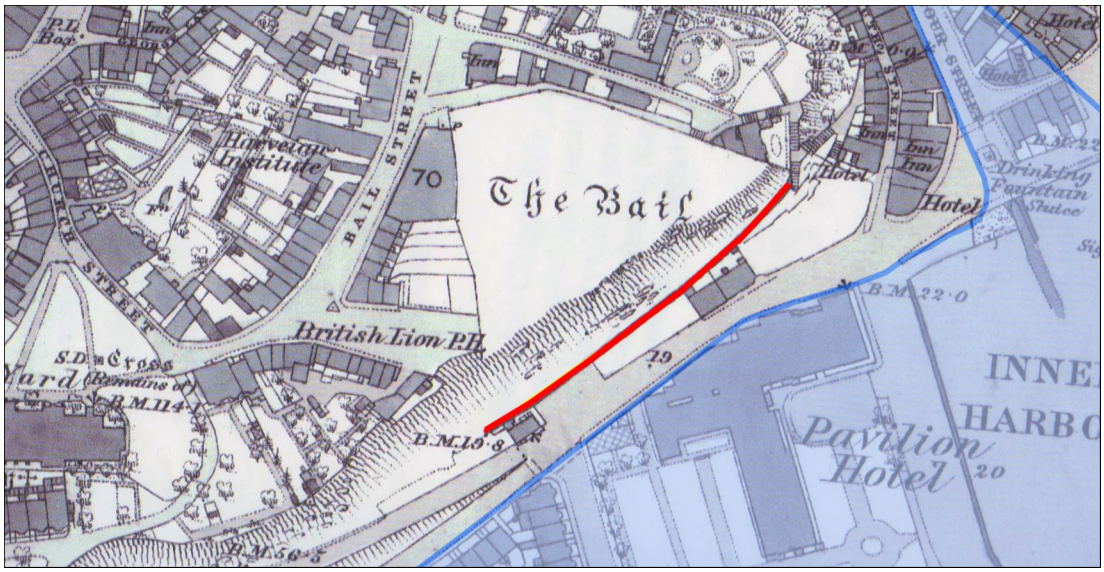
> *"All that now remains of the former edifices consists of some lines of masonry and fragments of columns and capitals in the garden of the late incumbent's . house, still called the Priory;.....and a portion of the ancient wall forming the side of some stables at the corner of Bayle Street, in which are still the mullions of two small square windows. "*

If Mackie thought that these were the walls of the priory, it goes without saying that he, like many others, thought that this must have been the location of that priory.

So, the Bayle Court wall must remain a bit of a mystery for the time being

Wall 14 - the Battery Wall

The Battery Wall runs along the bottom of the cliff from the old toll house on the Lower Sandgate Road to the steps coming down from the Bayle Battery- across the whole frontage of that fortification. It has been highlighted in red on the map below, but nevertheless was a prominent feature on that map.



The "Battery Wall" drawn onto the 1872 OS map, in red, with the old coastline superimposed

The wall at the bottom of the Road of Remembrance

It would be easy to assume that it was put there as a curtain wall to counter any assault on the battery but there are two arguments to counter that view.

Firstly, the wall is still in good condition, as the picture above shows, although it is badly overgrown. It passes behind the modern-day buildings, as shown below and has been well-built out of dressed stone. The key thing to note is the slope of the wall, which suggests that the wall was probably built to prevent erosion by the sea. A sloping wall was better at diffusing the power of waves than a vertical one was in those days and the coastline was a bit closer in those days as the blue shading opposite shows.

The only notable sea defence work discovered so far is referred to in the Journals of the House of Commons for 1765/1766. The story starts on the 13th February 1766 with:

> *"A Petition of the Mayor, Jurats, and Commoners, of Church, the Town of Folkestone, in the County of Kent, and of several of the principal*

The wall extending behind the modern-day buildings in the Lower Sandgate Road

Inhabitants of the said Town and Parish of Folkestone, was presented to the House, and read;

Setting forth, That the Parish Church of Folkestone aforesaid is situate at the upper End of the said Town, at a small Distance from the Cliff; and that, by the continual flowing of the Tide, and raging of the Sea against the said Cliff, the Bank whereof is a loose sandy Soil, the same is considerably washed away, whereby the said Parish Church is in Danger of falling, unless timely prevented by erecting one or more substantial Jettee, or Jettees, at the Foot of the said Cliff, under the said Church;

and that the lower Part of the said Town, and the Beach whereon the Fishermen are accustomed to resort to, have been, from Time to Time, preserved from, and defended against, the overflowing and raging of the Sea, by Two large Jettees, or Heads, one at the East, and the other at the West End of the said Town, which Jettees, or Heads, have been, from Time to Time, kept in Repair by the Fishermen, and other Inhabitants of the said Town, by a voluntary Subscription;

and that, by Length of Time, and many high and raging Tides, the said Jettees, or Heads, are become very ruinous; and should they go entirely to Decay, not only the said Beach, but all the lower Part of the said Town, must inevitably be overflowed and carried away by the Sea;

and that the Fishermen of the laid Town are become very poor, and neither they, nor the other Inhabitants of the said Town, who are burdened with numerous Poor, are able to raise so large a Sum of Money as will be needful to be expended in erecting a good and substantial Jettee, or Jettees, for the Security and Support of the said Parish Church, and to repair, and keep in Repair, the said Jettees, or Heads, without the Aid of Parliament:

And therefore praying, That Leave may be given to bring in a Bill for erecting a Jettee, or Jettees, for supporting the said Church, and for repairing, and keeping in Repair, the said Jettees, or Heads, by such Ways and Means, and in such Manner, as to the House shall seem meet.

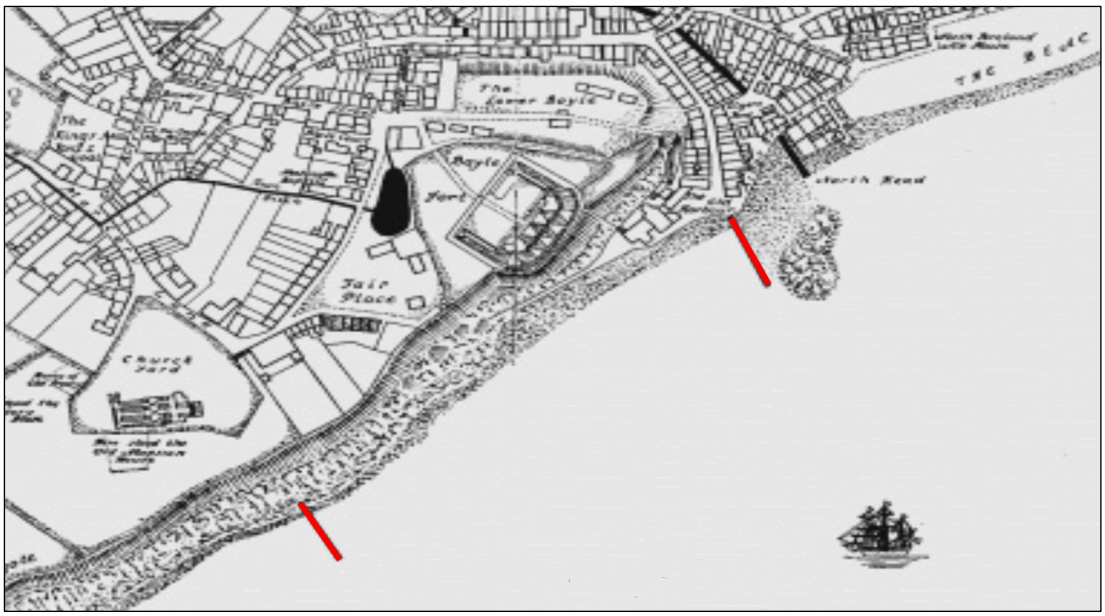
The petition was to the Consideration of a Committee, which included Mr Bouverie, our local MP, and this resulted in a Bill being brought before Parliament on 26th February 1766. The Bill was passed on the 17th March 1766 and received Royal Assent on the 11th April 1766.

That Act of Parliament enabled funds to be raised for the repair of the old, and the erection of new jetties. The costs of maintaining these was covered by a duty levied on any coal brought into or through the town. This duty afterwards became a part of the revenue for the paving and repairs of the borough, and since the establishment of the Railway Company's Coke Works, and the great increase of the population, amounts yearly to a large sum.

The two jetties are shown on the 1782 map opposite, but there is no sign of the Battery Wall, the Lower Sandgate Road or the Toll House shown on the 1872 map on the previous page, neither is there any mention of a wall in the petition above.

This means that the wall was built sometime between those two maps, i.e. between 1782 and 1872. By that time, military developments would have rendered such a curtain wall obsolete- the second reason why it was unlikely that this was its function.

However, there are clearly a couple of repairs to this wall which give some clue to its



The 1782 map showing the two jetties provided for in the 1766 act of parliament in red

heritage.

1. The wall is constructed between 1782 and 1872
2. Just to the right of the buildings on the 1872 map the wall has been reconstructed out of brick right up to the stairs. The grassy mounds in front of the wall, below, suggest a landslip. Since the replacement section was a vertical wall, built of brick, in the same style as the other battery walls, it is likely to have been a defensive wall built to repel the expected Napoleonic invasion between 1803- 1805. This might narrow the timescale for the original wall to 1782- 1803.
3. In the middle of this brick section there is a concrete repair, presumably made necessary by another landslide, which probably dates from the 20th century.

This might suggest that the wall was constructed some time around 1800, but just as with the Bayle Court Wall, the wall remains a bit of a mystery. All we can do at this time is provide the focus for future research.

The first repair to the Battery Wall- running from the junction just out of shot the the left as far as the steps on the white steps wall behind the dog-walker.

The grassy mounds, a clear indication of a landslide, do not occur anywhere else along this section of the seafront.

The start of the second repair is shown by the arrow.

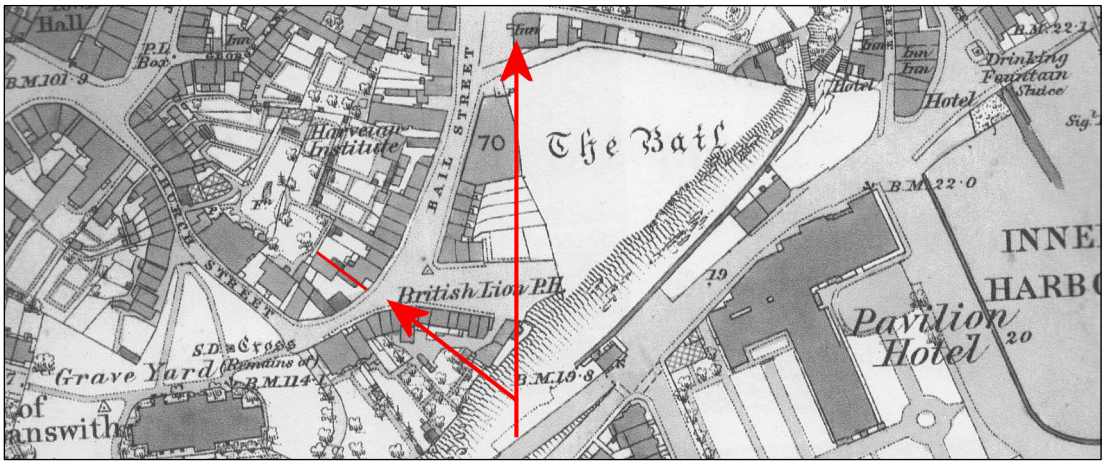
The second repair to the Battery Wall- made out of concrete and running to the right of the lamp post in the middle of the picture.

The other end of the second repair shown by the red line.

The direction of the stairs was changed by the addition of the white wall and it is assumed that this took place at the same time as the first repair

Wall 15 -Cottage Wall

Only a small section of this wall is visible from the road, as shown top opposite, but its full size and position is shown by the small red line on the map below. Note that there is no building to the left of the wall as it meets the roadside and the picture opposite shows where the brick frontage was added sometime later. It is also reasonable to assume that the cottage was built against an existing wall, which was cleverly utilised



The 1872 OS map showing the full length of the Cottage Wall in red with True North and the bearing of the wall arrowed

The Cottage Wall outside number 5 The Bayle

Note the addition of the brick frontage to the left of the wall as we look at it.

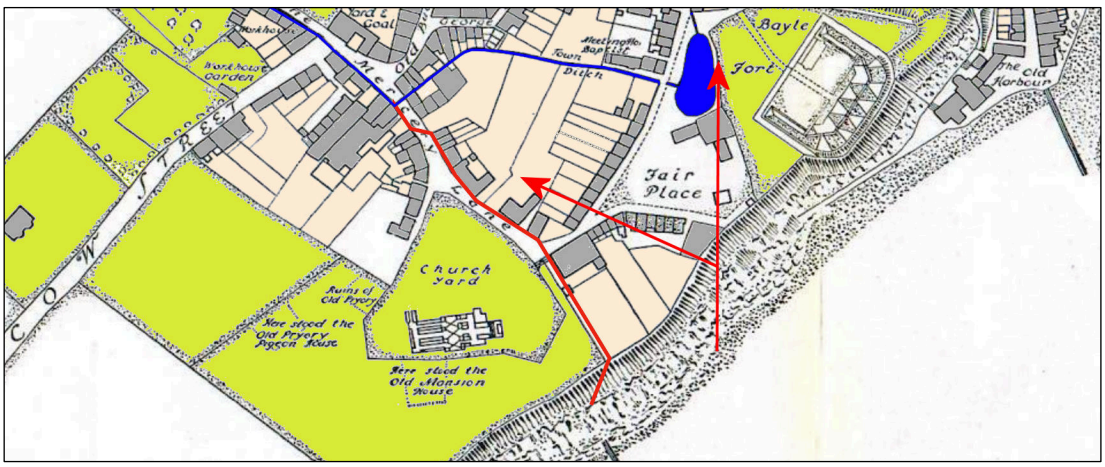
to provide a front garden.

The wall was surveyed by the Canterbury Archaeological Trust in 2010, prior to the planned redevelopment of numbers 1-3 (behind the wall as you look at it in the picture above) but were unable to come to any definite conclusions as to the date or function of the wall, other than to say that . and that another section of it was incorporated into the British Lion opposite. Both of those assertions deserve a closer look.

The arrows on the map opposite indicate True North and the bearing of the wall which is 315º. It also extends the full length of the plot boundary. None of the plots on the 1782 map below are the same size and shape as any of those on the later map and, taking one of their boundaries as an example, the bearing of those boundaries were 294º.

A few degrees difference might be put down to the inaccuracies of the earlier survey but a difference of 21 degrees is significant and shows that this boundary wall does not appear on the earlier map, which suggests that this wall was built in the 19th century, most likely as a boundary wall for the open yard shown on the map opposite.

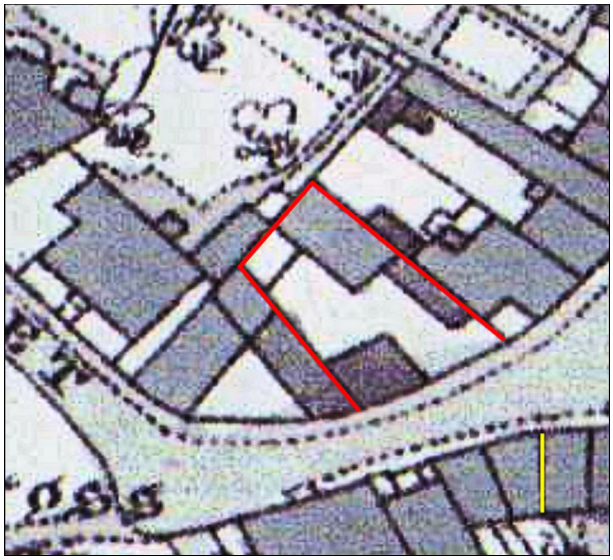
If this wall was built as a yard wall, you might expect to see some evidence of the walls on the other sides of the yard. To find it, we have to go to the cycle park of the



The site of the Cottage Wall on the 1782 map showing the bearing of the building plots that existed before the wall was built

The cycle park of the Woodward Hall showing the yard wall in the corner

Woodward Hall where a small portion of the wall is still visible, as shown in the picture above. The top of this wall is more or less level with the Cottage Wall, in spite of appearing lower in the picture. So the full extent of the wall of the yard would have been that shown in the picture on the right.



It is difficult to create an accurate chronology of what was built and when, but it is clear that the building in the top corner of the yard would have been the reason for adding to the height of the wall as it appears in the back garden of the cottage.

Wall 16 - British Lion Wall

This wall is not visible from the outside of the building, but its orientation can be determined from the angle of the wall at the roof-line. This has been measured as being on a bearing of 155º and is shown in yellow above. If if had been an extension of the Cottage Wall as suggested in the Canterbury Archaeology Trust report it would have been on a bearing of 135º. It is clear from the above that the two do not line up in any way.

The British Lion Wall was also surveyed by the Trust in 1995 and found to date from around 1350- 1450. Beams in the pub have been dated to around 1500 so these two walls are from separate eras.

Wall 17 - Guildhall Street Wall

This wall was discovered during works carried out to construct a row of tree pits in Guildhall Street during the spring and summer of 2002. As the work progressed, it was monitored by Canterbury Archaeological Trust who later produced a report[1] outlining how they discovered a length of ancient wall running under and between four of the

1. "An archaeological watching brief during the excavation of 13 tree pits associated with the improvements of Guildhall Street and Sandgate Road, Folkestone"
2. https://webapps.kent.gov.uk/KCC.ExploringKentsPast.Web.Sites.Public Copyright Kent County Council.

Showing the location and approximate dimensions of the Guildhall Street Wall.

pits, although there was some suggestion that the wall may have originally been longer.

The wall was described on KCC's Exploring Kent's Past website[2] as:

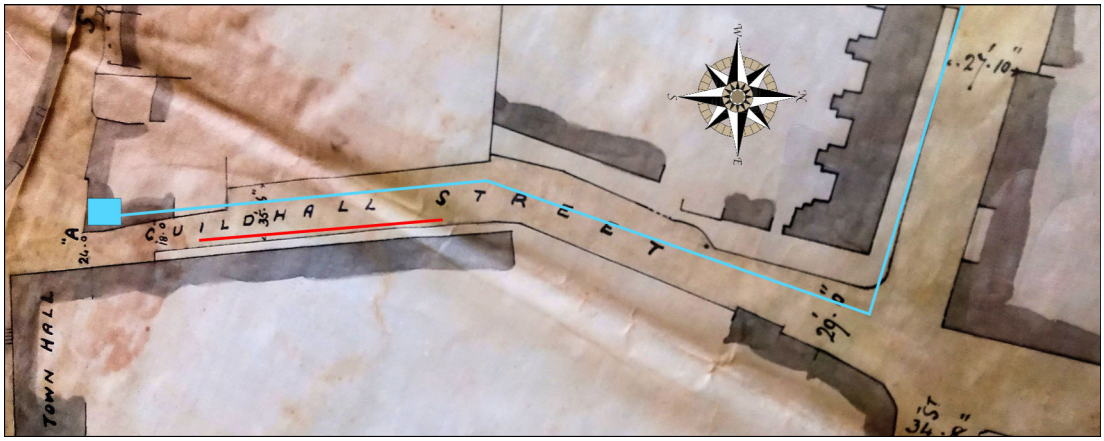
> *"A length of walling totalling 36m. Made of stone bonded by a coarse gritty creamy white mortar. It is aligned parallel to the modern street frontage (southeast-northwest). Evidence for cellar structures, in the form of brick rubble, suggest that this wall was the wall of the structures fronting the streets rather than just being a boundary wall"*

That website describes the wall as Post Medieval dating from approximately 1540-1763.

The shop frontage on the left, in the picture above, and shown in grey on the 1861 plan below serve as reference datum lines. The measurements on the plan below give what is assumed to be pavement kerb line of 1.8 metres (6 feet). The medieval wall is 3 metres (10 feet) from that shopfront, i.e. 1.2 metres (4 feet) from the kerb line below, as indicated the red line.

The right-hand side of Guildhall Street was defined, on both the 1698 estate map and the 1782 survey by the course of St Eanswythe's Water. This ran down the street and into a cistern, shown on the 1698 map and estimated to be under the corner of the corner of the Kings Arms that was there in 1861 when the map below was drawn.

This makes it likely that the Guildhall Street Wall was a building(s) fronting onto the North-East side of the original Shellons Lane and possibly leading up to the Shorelands Gate.



A street plan from 1861 showing the approximate locations of the Guildhall Street Wall and St Eanswythe's Water

Sandgate Road with the line of tree showing the line of the walls underneath.

The red lines show the corner of the medieval wall underneath Tree Pit 17

Wall 18 - Sandgate Road Wall

This wall, too, is no longer visible since it is deep below the modern road surface. The wall was described on KCC's Exploring Kent's Past website[2] as:

> *"A length of walling totalling 14.50m. Made of stone bonded by a coarse gritty creamy white mortar. It is aligned parallel to the modern street frontage of Sandgate Road. Evidence for cellar structures, in the form of a stone and brick vaulted cellar which continues under the present frontage, suggests that this wall was the wall of the structures fronting the streets rather than just being a boundary wall."*

That website describes the wall as Post Medieval dating from approximately 1542-1782.

The Norman gatehouse would have been situated near the far end of the Travel agent on the right and it would be all too easy to be tempted to think that is in some way associated with the building line shown in red on the left but there is too big a gap in the dates between them and, based on the width of the original Shellons Lane shown on the previous page, the width of the track going through the town gate would be about the same width as the paving stones outside the travel agent.

Wall 19 - The Cliff Edge Wall

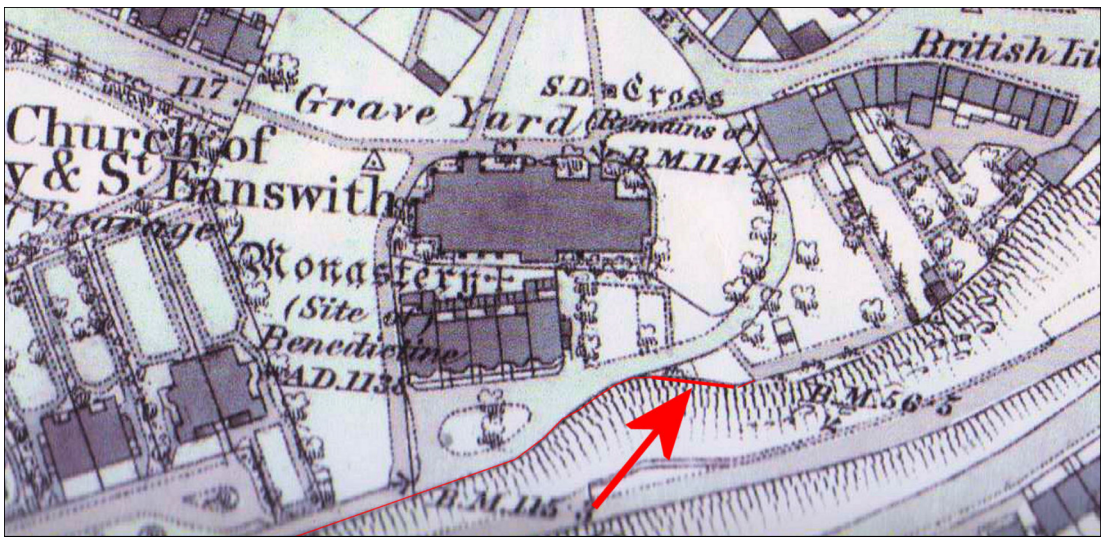
A number of people have stumbled across this section of wall in the past couple of years but it wasn't considered of any significance until local historian Ray Duff wondered if it fit somewhere into the "Folkestone Walls" jigsaw puzzle. The wall is there, in plain view, but you do have to be a bit adventurous to get to it.

For a while it looked as though we may have discovered the Elizabethan *"new wall on the cliff"* that Mackie says was built in preparation for an invasion from Spain but this, unfortunately, was not to be.

Closer examination of the wall showed that it ran on a bearing of 260° and, using that bearing to search the 1872 map opposite, the only bit of wall to fit was that indicated and it was part of the wall that extends all the way up the war memorial junction.

The wall follows the curve caused by a landslide. This landslide curve is not shown on the 1782 map, so the landslide happened after that date, which means that the wall was constructed after that date too. The map also shows another retaining wall at the

A close up of the Cliff Edge Wall frontage above and showing its location lower down on the hill facing the back of Marine Terrace on the seafront.



The section of wall highlighted on the 1872 OS map

Wrought iron estate fencing similar to that found on the edge of the cliff in front of the church.

bottom of the cliff, which is still there today but heavily overgrown. It is assumed that this was built at the same time as the wall at the top.

The picture at the top of the previous page shows that there is a metal railing in front of the wall and there are a number of smaller lengths scattered all along the length of the cliff. This is of a pattern popular in the heyday of Victorian cast iron works around the end of the 19th century. which may indicate the age of the wall.

The full height of this kind of fencing is shown above, which is a good indication of how much is buried in front of the wall and, indeed, the height of the wall itself. It does, however, leave a number of questions hanging:

- Was the fence built in front of the wall. If so, why?
- Was the fence added some time later?
- Was the fence originally on top of the wall, as you might expect.
- If so, when did it fall and why?

Copyright notice

Whilst every reasonable effort has been made to trace copyright holders for images used from the electronic public domain, this has not always proved possible. The inclusion of such images has been considered as “fair use” for educational and commentary reasons. If you are the copyright owner of an image and disagree with this interpretation, please contact the publisher to discuss

In the middle ages, after the Norman Conquest, the country lived under feudal servitude, but as merchants and craftsmen in towns grew richer, they resented that feudal control and sought to escape it by the grant of a charter from the king or their feudal lord. That charter usually had to be bought but it did grant them a number of associated rights - usually to do with trading and holding markets.

There had to be a clear distinction between the “free men” of the town and those still bound to their feudal lord.

This was achieved by building an enclosing wall around the town. Inside the walls, the freemen formed a council and ran their own affairs. Outside, the lord of the manor still had control.

Those walls also allowed the freemen to raise money by taxing outsiders wanting to trade in their market as they entered the gates.

Folkestone was granted such a charter in 1313, a charter that still governed the election of the town mayor until 2006 but there has been no mention of the the town having walls until local historian Samuel Joseph Mackie suggested it in 1856.

If the town did have walls, where are they now? This, then, is the quest to answer that question and to see if Mackie was right all along.